



FOR HIS CAUSE A LITTLE HOUSE

A Hundred Years of History of
Rumple Memorial Presbyterian Church

Donald Saunders

*For
His Cause
A Little House*

**A Hundred Year History
of Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church**

by

DONALD B. SAUNDERS



The Appalachian Consortium was a non-profit educational organization composed of institutions and agencies located in Southern Appalachia. From 1973 to 2004, its members published pioneering works in Appalachian studies documenting the history and cultural heritage of the region. The Appalachian Consortium Press was the first publisher devoted solely to the region and many of the works it published remain seminal in the field to this day.

With funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities through the Humanities Open Book Program, Appalachian State University has published new paperback and open access digital editions of works from the Appalachian Consortium Press.

www.collections.library.appstate.edu/appconsortiumbooks

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons BY-NC-ND license. To view a copy of the license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses>.

Original copyright © 1988 by the Appalachian Consortium Press.

ISBN (pbk.: alk. Paper): 978-1-4696-4201-7

ISBN (ebook): 978-1-4696-4203-1

Distributed by the University of North Carolina Press
www.uncpress.org

THE APPALACHIAN CONSORTIUM

The Appalachian Consortium is a non-profit educational organization comprised of institutions and agencies located in the Southern Highlands. Our members are volunteers who plan and execute projects which serve 156 mountain counties in seven states. Among our goals are:

Preserving the cultural heritage of Southern Appalachia
Protecting the mountain environment
Improving the educational opportunities for area students and teachers
Conducting scientific, social and economic research
Promoting a positive image of Appalachia
Encouraging regional cooperation



THE MEMBER INSTITUTIONS OF THE APPALACHIAN CONSORTIUM ARE:

Appalachian State University
Blue Ridge Parkway
East Tennessee State University
Gardner-Webb College
Great Smoky Mountains Natural History Association
John C. Campbell Folk School
Lees-McRae College
Mars Hill College
Mountain Regional Library
North Carolina Division of Archives and History
Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy
Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild
U.S. Forest Service
Warren Wilson College
Western Carolina University
Western North Carolina Historical Society

To my parents

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments

Introduction

1: The Founding and the Founders 1

Mrs. Alfred M. Stewart. Col. William J. Martin. The Rev. Dr. Jethro Rumble and North Carolina Presbyterianism to the 1880's. Blowing Rock, 1880-1900. The German Reformed Church. The first building. W. M. Morris's deed of land. The Rev. C. A. Munroe and the Lenoir connection. The first members. Notes for Chapter One.

2: The Tufts Era, 1897-1923 33

The Rev. Robert P. Pell and mountain education. The arrival of the Rev. Edgar Tufts and his Blowing Rock work. A new generation of summer people: Dr. William J. Martin, the Rev. James I. Vance, the Rev. Charles G. Vardell. Building the stone church. The first Session. The formation of the Synod of Appalachia and its significance. The church and the Grandfather Home for Children. The death of Tufts; tributes to his work. Notes for Chapter Two.

3: From Mission to Mainstream, 1923-1940 65

Blowing Rock by the 1920's. The Rev. Charles G. McKarاهر's pastorate at Blowing Rock. Remodeling the church portico. McKarاهر's academy at Shulls Mills. The Rev. Walter K. Keys and Holston Presbytery home missions. The Rev. G. Sexton Buchanan and the first manse. The church's "fiftieth" anniversary celebration. Dr. Mary Warfield. The WOC. Mrs. Annie L. Cannon and the first education building. The church and the black community. The departure of the Rev. Buchanan. Notes for Chapter Three.

4: Rumple Goes to War, 1940-1956	97
<p>The first Keys pastorate. The church and World War II. The deaths of Martin, Vance, and W. L. Holshouser. Postwar changes. Keys's illness. David Ovens and Grandfather Home Sunday. The pastorate of the Rev. Robert D. Earnest. The building of the Negro Community Church. Two pastors with Korean connections: the Rev. Sam S. Cappel and The Rev. Leroy T. Newland. The recall of Dr. Keys. Notes for Chapter Four.</p>	
5: Leaps of Faith, 1956-1973	121
<p>Keys's second pastorate. Lay leaders and leadership opportunities. Robert A. Dunn and the Dunn Youth. Building the present manse. The Rev. Blake Brinkerhoff and the Summer Residents Committee. Brinkerhoff and the KKK. The changing character of the town. The Rev. Richard Holshouser and the Cannon Educational Building. Return to Concord Presbytery. Notes for Chapter Five.</p>	
6: Shocks and Signs, 1973-1987	151
<p>Holshouser's departure and the call of the Rev. Francis C. Collier. The Collier case. Recovery, redirection, and reunion. The pastorate of the Rev. Vaughn Earl Hartsell. Rumple Sundays and preaching missions. Celebrating the centennial. Whither the town? Whither Rumple? Notes for Chapter Six.</p>	
Bibliography	175
Index	181

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

INSPIRATION FOR WRITING this book came on a spring walk in 1985 along the then-unopened stretch of the Blue Ridge Parkway, in sight of the Grandfather, between Blowing Rock and Linville. I knew the job needed doing; I had just concluded another semester's teaching; I needed a project to break a block; and I determined then to make my services available for the task.

My only concern was that others with more knowledge and experience than I had a more rightful claim to write it. Looming like giant footsteps across a trail were professional considerations due my acquaintance from days at Davidson College, the Carolinas Presbyterian professor par excellence, Blowing Rock summer resident and worshipper at Rumble, raconteur and repository of many pertinent facts, both trenchant and trivial, Dr. Chalmers G. Davidson. I knew that Dr. Davidson had been asked to take the job on. I did not yet know he had begged off the project, on the grounds that his semi-retirement, which he fills as the first Archivist of Davidson College, was busy enough, and he needed no new writing projects to tackle. He has since been a valuable consultant to the one hundredth anniversary history project for the town of Blowing Rock; his contributions will undoubtedly prove important when Appalachian Consortium Press publishes the work in 1989.

Now, most all of us who attended Davidson in the years Dr. Davidson taught history there, whether we took his courses or not, stood and still stand in awe of his learning, of his good humor, and of the peculiar nature of his curiosities: his interest in matters genealogical sometimes seems surpassed only by his love of an earthy story. He has revealed, I am sorry to inform the reader, precious few such stories for this book, with which I might have enlivened the narrative. But he did assure me, when I asked him, that the topic was mine if I wanted it, and that he was always ready to help. I am grateful for the professional and personal regard he has shown me as this work has progressed, giving me free rein in the Davidson College archives, particularly in the Dr. William J. Martin papers, and answering numerous questions about Blowing Rock and its people. His com-

ments on the book's final draft proved valuable. He knows a great deal more than I knew to ask; he has been of enormous help.

But even before I had to wrestle with a legend like Dr. Davidson, the project itself had taken shape in the mind and heart of the Rev. Vaughn Earl Hartsell, whom I knew only slightly when I started, but who came to be a friend. His desire to observe the church's anniversary by such a project, his constant interest, his own knowledge of the subject, his help in arranging oral interviews and in finding the funds for the publication of this book, and above all his unquestioning faith in my ability and determination to complete it: these have kept me going in the year and a half since I volunteered to do the job.

I also owe a great deal to Dr. Jerrold L. Brooks, Executive Director of The Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches at Montreat, and the staff there, especially Mr. Bill Bynum. Before there were local church histories, there are the records at Montreat—congregational, Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly—which make local accounts possible. All historians, and all Presbyterians, now reunited in the Presbyterian Church, USA, have reason to be grateful for, and to continue to support, the facility and its rich resources.

When the project began, I knew numerous oral interviews would be desirable and necessary to give a human dimension to the story and to alert me to the many details I knew nothing of in the history of the church and the town. Several longtime members at Rumble and residents of the community have been kind enough to grant extended interviews, some quite early on, others only later in the project. Appropriate notes appear throughout the text to these invaluable sources of information and support. Among those who helped me in this way were: former pastors Robert D. Earnest, Blake Brinkerhoff, and Richard Holshouser; elder emeritus Howard Holshouser and his wife, Mabel; other members of the Holshouser family, including William L. Holshouser, Jr., and his wife, Louise VonCanon Holshouser, of Banner Elk, and Virginia (Mrs. Eubert "Peck") Holshouser, of Boone; former elders Rudolph Greene and Perry Lentz; former Summer Residents Committee chairmen Eugene S. Bowman and Andy Nimmo; William C. Cannon of Concord and Blowing Rock; members Agnes Coffey, Gladys Tester, and "Miss Hattie" Brown; former member, deacon, and elder Jim O'Dell; summer residents Betsy McClure, Linda Yarnell, and the Rev. Allan Smyth; and Mrs. McClure's aunt, Helen Weedon Deaton of Statesville, daughter of one of Blowing Rock's earliest transplant families and Rumble members. Jean Clawson, liaison from the Session to the Historical Committee, kindly

helped me interview Jo Greene, now of Winston-Salem, who with her late husband Spencer lived in Blowing Rock from the late 1930's to the 1960's, and who recalled for us many anecdotes regarding Annie Ludlow Cannon.

From the start the backing of the Historical Committee at the church has been very reassuring, as has been that of the special Centennial Committee chaired by George Kinnard. It almost goes without saying that without the help of Jerry Burns, editor of *The Blowing Rocket* and a son of Rumble Church, and use of the materials collected through the resources of *The Blowing Rocket* over the years, this work could never have been written. As of this writing, the special 1976 edition of that newspaper devoted to the history of the town is the single best source of local historical information. He also gave me access to various items collected at the church reaching back well into the early years of its history. Among the more recent and valuable materials are two hefty scrapbooks assembled between 1962 and the time of her death in 1978 by Mrs. William C. (Elizabeth) Lentz. Would that such a diligent effort had been made from the beginning, or were still underway. Tom and Michelle Bouvier, church members and word processor enthusiasts, gave help preparing the first, brief version of the project on their computer; their example made me realize the value of learning the computer and helped inspire me to acquire my own.

Summer resident Eleanor (Mrs. Leon S.) Bradshaw showed the Rev. Hartsell and me around the First Presbyterian Church of Salisbury, introduced us to the church historian there, Mrs. Josephine Klutz Krider, and toured with us the old manse once inhabited by Jethro Rumble (now the historical museum of Salisbury) and the Salisbury public library's collection of local history. Mrs. Julia Keys Williams of Sarasota, Florida, daughter of longtime pastor Walter K. Keys, answered thoughtfully and graciously many questions during her visit to Blowing Rock in April 1987. For information concerning the Boone Fork Academy, I thank Katherine J. Peterson of Boone, formerly a teacher at Watauga High School and at Appalachian State University; and for information on R. A. Dunn and his Blowing Rock property, Jim Love of Mount Holly. I am also grateful to my departmental colleague, North Carolina historian Dr. Ruby S. Lanier, who serendipitously was working on a sketch of the Rev. Jesse Rankin of Lenoir while I was engaged in this project, and so was able to give me materials concerning the Lenoir Presbyterian Church and help in other ways with source references. For assistance in conceptualizing some of the interpretations contained in this book, I thank Dr. Patricia D. Beaver, Professor and Chair of the Anthropology Department at ASU; need-

less to say, the final form my thoughts have taken is my own responsibility. The Rev. Dr. Thomas F. Clark, artist, sculptor, my professor of Old Testament Bible at Davidson College, and historian of the Myers Park Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, was kind enough to read and comment upon a nearly-final version of the manuscript. The Rev. Lawton W. Posey, pastor of the Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church of Charleston, West Virginia, who has written numerous articles and reviews for several church publications, also read it and provided many welcome suggestions. Other favorable comments were kindly supplied by Dr. John W. Kuykendall, president of Davidson College; the Rev. Dr. Perry H. Biddle, Jr.; and Mrs. Margaret Tufts Neal. I am grateful too, for a careful reading of the last draft by Church members Mary Smith, Bernie Greene, Jerry Burns, and Jean Clawson; their sharp eyes caught a number of minor errors and omissions; those that remain are my own fault.

Publication was made possible by the Session of the Church, the Summer Residents Committee, and several special contributors: my thanks to Capt. and Mrs. Salem Van Every, who arranged for the Foundation of the Carolinas to contribute toward the underwriting of the book in memory of Mrs. Van Every's nephew, John Arvid Moberg, a member of Rumpel Memorial at the time of his death in September 1986; other members of the Moberg family; and to Willard and Betty Broyhill Gortner, area summer residents.

I also acknowledge the generous support of Dr. George P. Antone, my department chairman at ASU, and Dr. William F. Byrd, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, who provided me with a block of release time and other support for this work during Spring Semester 1987.

Finally, I express my debt to my parents, to whom I dedicate this book. Born and reared "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," they saw to it that "the faith once delivered to the saints" was taught to their children, both at home and in the church in which I grew up, Grace Presbyterian Church, Montclair, New Jersey. Had they not taken an interest in the affairs of Rumpel Church during several summers in Blowing Rock, I might never have been introduced to its ministry and its minister.

*Boone, N.C.
December 1987*

INTRODUCTION

FOR MORE THAN half of its one hundred years, it was known officially as the Blowing Rock Presbyterian Church. In all its early records, in presbytery minutes, and in reports—when it made them—to the denomination's General Assembly, the “little house” did not use its current name before 1940. And nothing shows that the congregation or session ever voted to adopt the name of its founding spirit. Yet by the time Holston Presbytery, to which the church had belonged since 1915, “went on record as recognizing the name of the Church in Blowing Rock to be the Rumble Memorial Church” in 1940, the role of Jethro Rumble, D.D., minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Salisbury for some forty years and a longtime summer resident, had been recognized for decades. Indeed, from the time of the construction of the present stone church, completed in 1912, the building has displayed a stone marker, donated by Sunday School pupils of the Salisbury congregation, memorializing Dr. Rumble.

It is in many ways fitting that the church should bear the name of a person from “off the mountain”: a major part in its history, and in its active life today, has been played by contributors, sung and unsung, who have lived among the mountains and its people but whose homes and livelihoods have been elsewhere. Two factors go a long way toward explaining this phenomenon. First, perhaps, was the sense of mission, at its height in the Presbyterian Church, U.S. during the long generation from the 1890's through the 1920's, reflected in the status of the Blowing Rock church as a missionary activity of the denomination in that era. This account will sketch many of the men and women who during those years were called to “labor in the vineyards for the Lord,” as they said, and whose zeal sometimes seems hard to recapture today. If they occasionally showed an imperfect understanding of the people and the conditions they met in the mountains, their convictions have nevertheless left permanent impressions even on the very granite of the land.

The second factor has been the growing and changing role of the town of Blowing Rock as a summer resort over the past century. To many of their visitors in the early days, the mountains were a retreat, a solace, a sometimes-romanticized “place of quiet rest near to the heart

of God," as the old hymn has it. Later, a somewhat more strenuous round of "leisure" activities—golf, horsemanship, dining out, or shopping and sightseeing—increased the social and economic significance of the summer community. Each year, as the autumn leaves blew off the trees, these folks departed; but what they left behind, as contributions of time or money, has been vital to the church's survival. So without the support of professional church workers, and lay people whose lives were staked elsewhere, neither Rumble Memorial nor the town ever would have taken their present shape.

But the church's success in the community has depended equally on reaching out to, and meeting the needs of, local people. Not all mountain missionary work succeeded. And not all the resorts which were springing up in the era when Rumble Church was planted provided a permanent Presbyterian witness. The church at Highlands, N.C., for example, dedicated just two years before the one at Blowing Rock, struggled and died in 1910, and was not revived until interested persons, many of them retired outsiders, reorganized it in 1929. Linville, founded as a resort during the same decade the Rumble Church was organized in nearby Blowing Rock, has not maintained a regular Presbyterian place of worship despite several false starts. To keep a church alive and active, a base of permanent resident members, as has been the case at Rumble, is imperative.

For the local people who have shared in the work at Rumble Memorial, the church has fulfilled its characteristic roles: a source of comfort in times of pain and death, a place for celebrating weddings, baptisms, and holiday traditions, and a scene of spiritual study and worship. Early resident members often gave, sacrificially, of the labor of their hands and hearts, and from narrow bases of income, to build and maintain its physical plant and to carry on its programs. For some members even today, the church represents what was truly "the faith of their fathers": second, third, and even fourth generation descendants retain current membership. Like their forebears, they are still being challenged spiritually and ethically to display in their families and in the community the faith they have heard preached in the church. And like them, they take their places in the pews alongside the doctors, professors, city preachers, successful business people, and all sorts of folks from other places who make up the summer congregation, led by a common commitment to serve the same Lord.

Projects of outreach were and are jointly undertaken by the entire membership. The most noted of these, since 1918, has been the Church's support of Grandfather Home for Children in Banner Elk, of which much more will be said in this account. It is mentioned here as

an example of the way in which the sense of mission, the impact of the summer community, and the work of local residents have all come together to accomplish an unusual thing.

Nothing humans do on earth is permanent or perfect. Ink fades, buildings are pulled down and rebuilt out of all recognition, men and women err and die, "mind and mem'ry flee." The faith of Christians is that God remembers, rewards, and "maketh perfect"; the faith of historians, that the preserved memory of the past influences the present. Here, then, is something of what remains of the record of Rumple Memorial Church, in at least part of its context. It is written not simply to honor the living and memorialize the dead, certainly not to remind the Almighty what His people have done in this place. It, too, is service, and is inspired by example.

This page intentionally left blank

The Founding and the Founders

ON SEPTEMBER 17, 1887, at its regular fall meeting, the Presbytery of Concord, of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, received and approved a report from the Reverend C. A. Munroe of Lenoir that "he had organized a church [in Blowing Rock] on the 17th day of July, 1887, of 8 members. . . ." Presbytery then "ordered that the name of the church, Blowing Rock, . . . be put on the roll of churches," and the church had its official beginning. It was the culmination of years of effort to establish the denomination in Watauga County, North Carolina.¹

The first known call to the Presbyterian public to launch "A Church Enterprise in Watauga, N.C." was made in a letter signed by "Mrs. Alfred M. Stewart" in the *North Carolina Presbyterian* on October 18, 1882. Her audience would not have been large: there were only some 25,000 Presbyterians of all varieties in the state, out of a population of more than one million, by 1880, and circulation of the paper was certainly no more than a few thousand. The weekly journal, which reached church people from its offices in Fayetteville, was at the time a major source of news and information concerning the denomination, although it was not an official church publication. Besides news and letters, it also ran inspirational poetry, various lessons from Scripture, and even such almanac information as when to plant crops and recent weather reports. It was a logical forum in which to promote her efforts.

According to property deed records, Alfred M. and Emma Reid Stewart were from Mecklenburg County and probably lived in Davidson, although they do not appear on the 1880 census for that town. They first bought property in Blowing Rock in 1880: an eighty-acre tract from S. M. and Emma S. Clarke for \$700. Part of this tract, which

straddled the middle fork of the New River, was still known as "Stewart's field" in recent memory. Other acreage Emma Stewart bought in her own name later, including property on the south end of Main Street. In Davidson, she kept a boarding house, listed as "Stuarts Inn" in the College Handbook of that era, for college students during the school year, and another in Blowing Rock, the Skyland Inn, at what is now the Farm House Restaurant, for summer people. She was a member of the Davidson College Presbyterian Church; nothing in the records shows that she joined the church in Blowing Rock she helped to launch, but she must have attended services there in summer. The Stewarts' son, Herbert, or "Hub," lived in Blowing Rock and also in Southwest Virginia near Abingdon, as late as the 1950's; apparently he never married. He ran the Skyland Inn from the time his mother became infirm, about 1919, until the sale of the property in 1945 to the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Blackwell.²

In Davidson, the Stewarts would have known Col. William J. Martin and perhaps others from the college who spent their summers in the mountains. Her letter, in any event, was no doubt sparked by conversations in Davidson and Blowing Rock with Col. Martin (who long was an elder in the Davidson College Presbyterian Church) and the Reverend Dr. Jethro Rumble of Salisbury, both of whom were a great deal better known to Presbyterians across the state. Why neither of these men signed the letter is a mystery.

Her letter informed those "who live in more favored parts of our land" of the "widespread religious destitution in Watauga County," where the "few Presbyterians are literally as 'sheep without a shepherd.'" She reminded her readers that "Blowing Rock is resorted to yearly by visitors, among whom are members of our communion. But they come to us to find no sanctuary and no means of grace of our faith and order." She proposed to put up "an inexpensive house of worship," after obtaining a lot, to further the course of "religion and morality," and asked for donations "in our weakness . . . even if the aid rendered be small."³

Over the winter and spring the donations trickled in. Letters at the church preserved from that period show that small contributions came from all over the state. From as far away as Wilmington, \$15 was raised "among my young friends of the Second Presbyterian Church" by Miss May Colville, who expected Mrs. Stewart to remember her as "Miss Annie Rankin's friend" (Annie Rankin was a daughter of the Reverend Jesse Rankin of Lenoir). From Fayetteville, Mrs. L. M. Evans sent \$5 and regretted she could not "make it five times that amount." The Reverend Robert Zenas Johnston, pastor at Lincolnton

and stated clerk of Mecklenburg Presbytery, forwarded \$2, noting he was "on missionary ground" himself, helping to build a church at Iron Station in Lincoln County, and so could send no more. He signed himself "your old pastor" and thought of Mrs. Stewart as one of his "old friends." The reference is puzzling, for although he was a Davidson graduate, class of 1858, preached all his career in the Presbyteries of Concord and Mecklenburg, and had been Jethro Rumble's successor at the Providence and Sharon churches in southeast Mecklenburg County when Rumble moved to Salisbury in 1860, Johnston never preached near Davidson. Perhaps the Stewarts had lived in one of these areas before taking up residence in Davidson. Or they may have provided him board on his visits to the town in his capacity as a trustee of the college from Mecklenburg Presbytery: he served from 1871 to 1879, and again from 1897 to 1908.⁴

To Emma Stewart's call came two especially interesting responses from persons who remembered their own visits in Watauga County: Arnold W. Miller, pastor of First Church, Charlotte, and Mrs. Peter Tinsley Penick, of Mooresville. Miller recalled that "when we were a part of Concord Presbytery [i.e., before 1869], Watauga was one of my favorite counties, and in several portions of it I have preached. I shall always feel a deep interest in its welfare and hence, hail with delight, the first movement tending to the establishment of Presbyterianism in that remarkable section." When Miller died in 1892, a tribute at the state Synod meeting observed that "the people of Western North Carolina will long remember his labors. There the inmates of many homes have been permitted to read numerous religious and moral periodicals, sent by him year after year to the children, who otherwise never would have seen these periodicals." Miller, a native of Charleston, South Carolina, served his Charlotte charge from 1865 to shortly before his death.

Mrs. Penick, wife, mother, mother-in-law, and daughter-in-law of Presbyterian divines, sent Mrs. Stewart "one dollar which I hope will not be too late to be useful in 'putting a few nails' in the house of worship you are building." She wrote, "I love our grand old mountains! Many of the happiest days of my girlhood were spent among them, and Blowing Rock is associated with some of my tenderly cherished memories." According to her letter, she and several family members had spent "some weeks at Shull's Mills and Morris" in 1879 and had seen and felt then the need for a church in that vicinity.⁵

The donations received as a result of Emma Stewart's call were inadequate to begin work. Presbytery was at that time uninterested in pursuing the matter; money was apparently being raised for a church

at Jefferson, but major support was not yet forthcoming for any new construction ventures. No doubt what finally got the Blowing Rock project off the ground was the support of her two collaborators, Col. William Joseph Martin (1830–1896) of Davidson College, and Jethro Rumple (1827–1906), minister at the First Presbyterian Church of Salisbury. The contributions these prominent North Carolina Presbyterians and Blowing Rock summer residents had already made to the denomination were well known in the state and the region.

Sometime during his tenure as professor of chemistry, geology, and natural history at Davidson, which began in 1869, Col. Martin sojourned in Blowing Rock. The exact date has not been pinpointed, but what drew him is clear: it was his interest in the geological formation of what were already being called the oldest mountains in America. Born in Richmond the son of an Irish immigrant physician, Martin was an 1854 graduate of the University of Virginia. He studied chemistry there, but according to one who has written about his career, Martin drew his inspiration to teach from classes under the famed William Holmes McGuffey, whose *Eclectic Readers* and *Eclectic Spelling Book* helped shape popular education in nineteenth century America. After teaching three years at Washington College in Pennsylvania upon earning his Master of Arts degree, Martin was invited to succeed the well-known Elisha Mitchell at the University of North Carolina in 1857. His academic career was interrupted by service with the famous N.C. Bethel Regiment, which he helped to raise among Chapel Hill students, during the Civil War. He saw action in several campaigns, advancing from captain to colonel, and was three times wounded. The scene of his return home, which came down through his family, is reminiscent of the classic screen version in “Gone With the Wind”: alone and exhausted on a “pitiful-looking,” half-starved gray horse he arrived unrecognized and mistaken for drunk until he was cleaned up by his brother-in-law and a faithful “old darky.”⁶

As the University was forced to close its doors in 1867, Martin moved to Columbia, Tennessee, founded a private academy, and taught school for two years. He then joined two of his former Chapel Hill colleagues at Davidson, where he taught generations of boys and filled various leadership positions until his death. From 1884 to 1887 he was college vice-president, and acting president in 1887–88. He was awarded the honorary Doctor of Letters degree from two institutions, Hampden-Sydney College and U. N. C., in 1887 and 1889. Martin introduced laboratory instruction to the struggling liberal arts college, which was surviving Reconstruction largely on the prayers of Presbyterians and the remainder of the bequest received from Salisbury

merchant Maxwell Chambers shortly before the War. To build up the college's geology program, Martin tramped to the mountains for rock samples, often in the company of Washington Caruthers Kerr, Martin's predecessor as professor of chemistry, mineralogy, and geology at Davidson and state geologist from 1864 to 1882. Another who came with them was probably John Rennie Blake, an 1846 graduate of the University of Georgia and a contemporary of Kerr's at the Lawrence Scientific School in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1856 and 1857, who taught various subjects at Davidson from the Civil War to 1884. Blake and two nephews, W. B. and Robert Arrowood, taught a one-room school in Boone for a time after the War. Both Arrowoods later became Presbyterian ministers, but it is doubtful if their Boone enterprise was ever under the care of the denomination.⁷

The Colonel and his naturalist companions from the college were living in a generation for many of whom the hand of God in nature was becoming less and less apparent. Uniformitarian principles in geology had disturbed the comfortable belief in a six-thousand year-old earth; fossil studies were revealing extinct species; Charles Darwin's controversial writings posited processes of "natural selection" for the origin of species, and struggle for life, not harmony, as nature's ruling principle. Yet Martin's faith in a personal God did not falter. Tributes collected *in memoriam* by the college spoke positively of his Christian character and conviction as well as his extensive knowledge and scholarship. A former student, perhaps remembering experiences in the college's required chapel services, wrote: "I loved to hear him pray - there was such simplicity, such humility, such childlike faith." Rumble, who kept a sharp eye on the school from his position as secretary of its board of trustees for more than forty years, and who knew him well from summers in Blowing Rock, remarked at Martin's death:

Col. Martin's crowning was his absolute faith in God and in his word. His scientific studies did not shake, but only confirmed his faith. He knew that every scientific experiment ended in a mystery - "why" that could not be answered, and wisely reasoned that in the higher region of sacred science there would likewise be unanswerable mysteries. And so he could afford to trust the promises of God, and resign himself to the divine will.⁸

The Colonel and his wife, Letitia Coddington Coston of Wilmington, indeed understood something of the mysteries of divine will: they lost six of their ten children in infancy. But a son, William J. Martin, Jr., and a daughter, Mary Turpin Martin Sloop, retained lifelong associa-

tions with Presbyterian mountain activity, continuing the Colonel's work in the next generation.⁹

According to property records at the Watauga County Court House, Col. Martin first purchased land in Blowing Rock, a half-acre lot on Main Street near the present Episcopal church, from William M. and Edith M. Morris on October 6, 1886, just seventeen days before the Morrises deeded the property across the street for the Presbyterian church. But he and his family had undoubtedly been spending summers in town long before that date. In any event, two years later he purchased property on Chestnut Hill, and began building the house he called Chestnut Knoll, which still stands. Martin's daughter remembered that the "family was one of the first of the outlanders to establish a summer home at Blowing Rock."¹⁰

Another of the early summer residents was the Rev. Dr. Jethro Rumple of Salisbury. When and why the preacher and his family first decided to summer in Blowing Rock is uncertain. In her fascinating memoirs written during the 1930's, Hope Summerell Chamberlain of Salisbury, a member of Rumple's church, recalled being taken to Blowing Rock as a child for the sake of her mother's health; this would have been in the early 1880's. Perhaps the Summerells or other Salisbury Presbyterians introduced Rumple to the mountains; or perhaps the preacher introduced his parishioners to the mountain region he already knew.¹¹ In a newspaper interview given in the late 1930's, Etta Gregorie Norvell said she remembered staying at a Mrs. Brady's boarding house at the same time as Dr. Rumple, late in the season after the Blowing Rock Hotel had closed, during the summer of 1889. This seems a rather late date for Rumple to be in a boarding house, since by then he, like Martin, had purchased a lot from the Morrises, and probably had already built a house on Main Street.¹² Toward the end of his long life, he lived in a small summer cottage built for him on the property of his son-in-law, the Rev. Dr. Charles G. Vardell, on Chestnut Hill, a short walk from the Martins.

Jethro Rumple was one of the most remarkable Presbyterians and North Carolinians of his generation. "There is scarcely an area of the church's life and work in North Carolina to which at some time in his career Dr. Rumple did not make a significant contribution."¹³ A prolific writer and preacher, he also pioneered causes in religious education

and social concern. His belief in the responsibility of the church for its young people was evident all his life. He served almost fifty years on the board of trustees of Davidson College, his alma mater, and was the guiding spirit behind the founding of the Barium Springs Orphanage in Iredell County at about the same time (1888) he was involved in establishing the church in Blowing Rock. Both these institutions later named buildings in his memory. In addition, he served on the board of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, and is reported to have strongly favored the move of that institution from Hampden-Sydney to Richmond in 1895-98. In Salisbury, he was a member of the city public school board and secretary and treasurer of the board of directors of the "State Colored Normal School" which was established there in 1881. He held numerous posts at presbytery and synod level in the church, although he was never elected moderator of the General Assembly. The University of North Carolina honored him with the Doctor of Divinity degree in 1882.

Many persons prepared posthumous sketches of Rumple's life, including his daughter, Linda Lee Rumple Vardell. Hers was included in the 1916 edition of Rumple's *History of Rowan County*.¹⁴ She noted his birth on March 10, 1827, "in an unpretentious farm-house in Cabarrus County, N.C." and his early love of learning: "we can see the barefoot boy trudging the long way to the rough school house from which the first ambitions of his life must have come to him." He grew up in the Bethpage congregation, attended several "old field schools," and was educated for college by Moses Lingle at Flint Hill in Mecklenburg County. Graduated with distinction from Davidson College in 1850, he alternately taught school and studied at Columbia Theological Seminary, then located in Columbia, S.C., and was licensed to preach the gospel in 1856 by Concord Presbytery, "of which he was the remainder of his life a member." His premier pastorate was at the Providence and Sharon churches in Mecklenburg County; the first of these is one of the historic "seven churches of Mecklenburg," dating to 1764, while the second was an offshoot in 1851.¹⁵ Four years later, Rumple was called by the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Salisbury, where he was installed as pastor on November 24, 1860, and "continued to be their faithful and beloved pastor for the remaining years of his life on earth. . . ."

Rumple's daughter did not mention, nor did other published contemporary accounts of his life, that the famous preacher was born of unmarried parents. The fact was no secret in the small community he grew up in, and was apparently widely known during his lifetime. "He was the natural son of David Thomas Houston and Mary Winecoff

Rumple, the widow of John Rumple, Jr. It is apparent that his parents were kept from marrying, because his maternal grandfather stated in his will that if his daughter Mary Rumple married again she would have no part of his inheritance." Houston's will provided for his "beloved son known by the name of Jetherow Rumple born of Mary Rumple." But Rumple himself seems to have been cared for as a child by his eldest half-brother and wife, Levi and Christine Rumple. It may be that the minister's lifelong regard for the care of unfortunate children stemmed from his awareness of his own background.¹⁶

In his prime the Reverend Doctor Rumple was a large and robust man of exceptionally good health, and a vigorous public speaker. His daughter called him "a preacher of the old school, not disdaining the elaborate introduction to his sermons; and his style was clear, his diction elegant, and his moral always helpful and practical." Another who grew up in his congregation remembered, "From three-quarters to a full hour was allowed for the sermon, old fashioned, with all the bones of its structure fully visible, its fourthlys and fifthlys in sequence. . . . When at last the sermon was over, and the last hymn sung, Dr. Rumple would end the final prayer with a warm (Aye-men) in a tone that sounded as if he were glad to have done; and I would be glad with him."¹⁷

His concern for children was noted by all who knew him: he "always kept up his interest in and attendance on the Sunday School[;] he knew all the children in the congregation personally and was loved by them." Rumple and his wife, Jennie E. Wharton of Greensboro, whom he married in 1857, had two sons, Watson Wharton and James Walker, and a daughter, Linda Lee. Both the boys died young: Watson at age eighteen while a student at Davidson, James, "a lawyer of some promise," by drowning at age twenty-nine. Two years before his death James married Jane Dickson Vardell and had a son, James Malcolmson. The young widow thereafter married William J. Martin, Jr., the Colonel's son, whose own first wife had also died. Rumple's daughter married Charles Graves Vardell, Jane Dickson's brother; and thus family connections, first established no doubt during summers at Blowing Rock during the children's youth, were formed between the Rumples, Martins, and Vardells.¹⁸

With the Civil War in 1861 came the split in the Presbyterian Church not healed until 1983. Rumple moderated the called meeting of Concord Presbytery, held at Davidson College in June 1861, which reflected locally the process that led to the formation of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. During the War he served as secretary of the presbytery's Board of Committee on

Domestic Missions, which supplied chaplains to the Confederate Army. He took several tours of duty himself as chaplain, including one with Robert E. Lee's army in October 1862, and another, for ten weeks, with General Scales' Brigade of the Army of Northern Virginia. He reported that during the latter "an army church was erected, Bible Classes organized in each Regiment, a Soldier's Christian Association was formed, 400 New Testaments distributed, together with several thousand pages of Tracts, nine members received into the Presbyterian, and several into other churches, about 40 professed conversions . . . and double that number led to ask, What must we do to be saved?" Rumble modestly noted that "other missionaries came and cooperated in this blessed work."

Rumble also served on a Synod of North Carolina committee to raise funds for the education of children of deceased Confederate soldiers – a task presbytery, in the straitened circumstances which followed the defeat, declined to fund. In September 1864 he was elected Stated Clerk, a job he held for the next four years. Then during the last months of the conflict, war came home to Concord Presbytery: General George Stoneman's raid passed through much of Western North Carolina, including Watauga County, destroying much property and forcing postponement of presbytery's scheduled spring session.¹⁹

The war's end brought confusion to the whole South, and did not exclude organized Presbyterianism. Rumble seems to have been influential in retaining the structure which Southern Presbyterians had forged during the war and in rejecting overtures from the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., seeking their return – although a minority in Concord Presbytery opposed "hasty and premature" action which would commit the Southern Church to its independent stance.²⁰ On the other hand, he favored continued Southern Presbyterian work among newly-freed blacks, even if on an increasingly segregated basis. He was one of a two-man committee to sign a pastoral letter in the *North Carolina Presbyterian* in 1866 which observed that "our Pastors, churches, and people have always recognized [the blacks'] claim to christian equality and brotherhood, and have rejoiced to have them associated in christian union and communion in public services and precious sacraments of the Sanctuary." But the letter also encouraged establishment of Sabbath Schools and Day Schools "where the number of colored people is sufficient to require them" and wanted all schools "under the direction of suitable Southern teachers, if such can be obtained."²¹ Here was revealed the paternalism and fear of Northern influences which hampered much of the Southern church's effort among the freed population during the succeeding years. Already blacks were leaving Presbyterian

congregations; Rumble's Salisbury church, which had added "colored" members almost annually since the 1820's, dropped them from its rolls in 1868 after they had "voluntarily connected themselves with the Colored Presbyterian Church in union with the Northern General Assembly."²²

When in 1868 Rumble resigned as Stated Clerk, he had already become chairman of presbytery's sustentation committee, which in that era of hard times had the important task of finding financial support for its pastoral responsibilities. From this point on in his long career, Rumble was an earnest and resourceful promoter of evangelism. Almost all the positions he was to hold in the denomination reflected this concern. In the fall of 1869, presbytery took up for the first time since the war consideration of mission work in areas "west of the Blue Ridge Mountains." On behalf of his committee Rumble recommended putting "at least one missionary in each of the missionary counties . . . as soon as practicable, & also that they be empowered, for the more speedy evangelization of that region, to establish one or more mission Schools, as soon as the way shall be open." The major obstacle seems to have been the dearth of trained pastors, because of the war's disruption of schools and seminaries.²³ Rumble's committee by 1870 was promoting efforts to "cultivate extensive missionary fields in Yadkin, Burke, McDowell, Yancy [sic], Mitchell, Watauga & Ashe Counties, & hope ere many years to organize a circle of churches in regions where Presbyterianism has never been planted." His report that year identified one of the "charges" in the presbytery as "Jefferson, Boone (Ashe & Watauga Cos)," but no pastor or missionary was specifically named to hold the charge. In 1871, the Rev. B. L. Beall was recommended for a \$500 salary for missionary work in presbytery; perhaps he was the unnamed pastor who in the previous year had been instructed to spend two weeks laboring in Ashe and Watauga counties—in January and February!

Rumble himself went to work for a spell in the mountains in 1872. Presbytery arranged that "Rev. J. Rumble will spend six weeks in Watauga County, and two weeks at discretion during the summer." At its fall meeting, presumably as a result of interest created by Rumble and his predecessors, presbytery voted to support "the erection of a building for religious and Educational purposes in Watauga Co.," but there was no later record that such a building was ever put up, nor was a location mentioned. Raising funds to support such missionary work seems to have been extraordinarily difficult. Rumble's committee attempted in 1876 to extract the sum of \$4.70 from each church in presbytery to pay the regular evangelist's salary—he had preached 166

times that year—but got no response except from one congregation which “complains of the injustice of the basis of distribution, but does not promise to pay the average.”²⁴

Always creative and determined, Rumple in 1876 had his committee recommend the reorganization of the churches in Concord Presbytery into “Clusters for convenience of meeting and cooperation in church work. . . . At these meetings it shall be in order . . . especially to devise ways and means to search out and supply with the means of grace, the destitute portions of their territory.” One such “cluster” formed then brought Lenoir, Watauga, and Jefferson into the relationship which within a few years would bear fruit in Blowing Rock.²⁵

During the decade from 1878 to 1887, the energetic Salisbury pastor took on another project: publishing a series of articles in the *North Carolina Presbyterian* on the history of the denomination in the state. These articles provide not only an insight into the thinking of Rumple himself, but a good contemporary overview of religious conditions at about the time the Blowing Rock church was founded. What kicked off the project was a discussion at a meeting of synod in 1875 on “Presbyterian Aggressiveness”: was the religious body holding its own, or losing ground, when compared to other Protestant groups in North Carolina? Rumple was made a member of the inevitable committee formed to consider the subject and by 1877 was not only chairing the project, but “the labor of preparing the report all fell upon his hands.”²⁶ The completed articles ranged far beyond the original topic and are mostly historical, having interest in their own right; only three of more than thirty touched on “aggressiveness.” But on this topic, Rumple concluded that the distinctive features of Presbyterianism—its insistence on a methodically trained clergy, “the deliberation with which most of our members connect themselves with the Church,” the greater than average amount of its members’ contributions—all made for a “more permanent body” than was true of other denominations. Presbyterians had played a role in the state out of proportion to their numbers, it was true. But the answer to “the question whether we have been doing and are *now* doing our whole duty in the field” required knowing “what the obstacles are that have impeded our progress, what have been the causes of past and present failure, and what are the Scriptural remedies.” He thought the *Book of Church Order* was too brief and general on the “means of extending our church into destitute regions, or heathen lands,” tempting “our ministers and Presbyteries . . . to regard the preaching of the Gospel to established churches as the great, all-absorbing design of our church organization.”²⁷ To remedy the situation Rumple invoked the language of battle:

Now if it is right to receive instruction from an enemy, it is surely much more allowed to learn wisdom from the experience of our brethren of other religious denominations. While we would not abandon our habit of entrenching, and fortifying the ground already occupied, for any system of advancement however plausible, or successful, we could and should superadd to the pastoral system a more faithful and diligent developement [sic] of the Evangelistic arm of our church. . . . [O]ur five Presbyteries [in North Carolina] have scarcely five evangelists, all told. Not one-twentieth part of our ministers are evangelists. . . . We urgently need a reformation of popular sentiment upon this matter.²⁵

While Rumble rejected the Methodist system of bishops to supervise and appoint missionaries, he proposed to learn from their practice of training laypeople to take more active part "without remuneration" in local church work. He also believed the denomination might need to "pray for a peculiar set of laborers who like Paul . . . and others would consent to waive their right of leading about a wife, in order that they might devote themselves more fully to evangelistic work, men who would face poverty in order to plant the Gospel in destitute regions and build up churches on no other man's foundation. It is scriptural to be willing to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."²⁹

In concluding his articles on "Aggressiveness," Rumble changed his figure of speech to reflect the times:

In the loose agricultural and commercial systems of other days, when railroads and telegraphs were not yet dreamed of[,] when markets were distant, competition limited, and long credits the rule on all sides, men could afford to do business in a careless way. . . . But in the more rapid transactions of modern days, when small profits, cash payments, quick returns, and urgent competition are in vogue, the old course of business would be simply ruinous. And so in these modern times, when great activity and energy characterize many of the churches . . . the fruits of a large part of our missionary and evangelistic work have been gathered by other denominations because we are slow in planting churches and in gathering in members. It is our duty to practice the wisdom of the serpent as well as the harmlessness of the dove.³⁰

By 1879, the synod was discussing the appointment of a synodical evangelist to promote the cause of "aggressiveness." Frustrated perhaps by division over the issue at the presbytery level, synod in October 1879 elected the Rev. Charles Montgomery Payne "the first agent of Evangelistic Labor" and held the first synodical home missionary meeting in North Carolina.³¹ The next decade was to see a substantial

expansion of church planting, with redoubled efforts by both presbytery and synodical evangelists. The Blowing Rock church was to be one result.

The still-unincorporated village of Blowing Rock which Rumble and his friends knew in 1880 had a population of 339, living in 56 "families" (a census term, later changed to "households"). Almost all were farmers. Only two "merchant farmers," a schoolteacher, a nurse, and a music teacher (male) stood apart from the norm. Many of the families whose descendants later associated with the Presbyterian Church—Pitts, Sudderth, Greene, Coffey, Hartley, Oxendine—were already living in the township, but not one of them was among the eight charter members of 1887, whose names do not appear on the census rolls for 1880.

One of the "merchant farmers" listed was William M. Morris, who with his wife Edith Matilda Morris had moved to Blowing Rock within the previous decade. They had bought "the old Amos Greene place about 1874 and opened a house for summer boarders."³² The property they owned on Main Street was extensive. Four children, a son and three daughters, were listed in the family as of 1880, the two eldest "at school." Morris's store became the legal center of the town when it was incorporated and its limits defined by act of the North Carolina General Assembly on March 11, 1889: Blowing Rock extended three-fourths of a mile in every direction from his "store-house." Morris's boarding house operation had become increasingly typical for the town by that time. Even before the Civil War, a few families seem to have visited the mountains, but the number of summer people grew only after the War and its aftermath.³³ Arthur singled out Morris for special praise in his reminiscences:

He was most successful, and the good things he furnished for his boarders to eat will forever be remembered by all who had the good fortune to sit at his table. He had a most remarkable little bench-legged cow, which gave oceans of the richest milk imaginable. His deep featherbeds were good for tired legs after a day's wading in the creeks fishing for speckled trout.

One presumes Edith Matilda Morris, and probably her daughters, also had something to do with the food served and hospitality shown the guests! Arthur mentions a couple of other early boarding house

keepers: Len Estes, who “looked like General Grant,” built a house, a sawmill, and the dam on what would later be the Chetola estate, and later “moved West”; and W. W. Sherrell, who “bought the Harper property and opened two or three small houses for summer boarders about 1877 or 1878 at Fairview.” Sherrell (Sherrill) would later join Rumble Church.³⁴

By the later 1880’s, hotels were springing up to meet the growing demand for summer residences. The Green Park Inn, then in the separate Caldwell County town of Green Park, claims local precedence: it was built in 1883. No detailed census records exist for 1890, but in 1900 enumerators counted 805 people in 166 “families” in Blowing Rock; perhaps most notably for the shape the town was taking in its first full year of incorporation, five residents were listed as hotel proprietors or hotel keepers, while several new names were shown taking in boarders. Blowing Rock now also boasted two physicians (George W. Roby and Calvin J. Parlier), a postmaster (William Edmisten), a dentist (Andrew J. Toppings), several craftsmen of varying trades, a butcher, and, among the servants, an eleven year-old boy “wood chopper” for two school teacher sisters, Mollie M. and Gabriela (Gabrielle) E. Blair, the latter a recent valedictorian graduate of the Skyland Institute, which, like the Presbyterian church, had been established in 1887. The only “preacher” listed in 1900 was a black man, 45 year-old George W. James, boarding with a black school teacher named Long. Most of the town’s residents were still farmers, but already had come a New York-born “retired merchant” and his wife, Ogdon (Ogden) E. and Mary C. Edwards, the first of a much later trend. Summer resident Gaston Gage remembered “Colonel” Edwards from his childhood: he was tall, thin, always wore a skull cap, and repeated for the children lore and sayings he had picked up on his world travels. “Apparently he had made and lost a number of fortunes,” Gage recalled. Mary Edwards founded the “Community Service Fund,” a predecessor organization to the Blowing Rock Community Club, which still functions. By that time, too, Moses Cone, textile magnate of Greensboro, had begun to develop his estate out from the center of town. Many local residents were earning cash money working among his crops, orchards, and livestock. So “outlanders” were already beginning to make their mark in the growing community.³⁵

In her 1882 letter, Emma Stewart called attention to the “religious destitution” of the town. How accurate was this estimation? It is true that no permanent place of worship seems to have been established before the Presbyterians erected their structure in 1886; but the public morals of the community during the 1880’s appear to have been, by the

standards of the times, restrained and decorous. Not that there was much real trouble to get into. In a day when waiting for the mail could occupy one for hours, the few public amusements were tame: gathering wildflowers, going on a picnic, taking a walk, fishing in one of the various forks. Nostalgia may have colored the reminiscences preserved of those early days in the community, but when in the next generation Blowing Rock was favored by a smarter set, oldtimers decried seeing grown women "riding astride," not observing the Sabbath, chewing gum "as a goat would a towel he had pulled from the clothes line," and drinking soft drinks with their beaux in public.³⁶

Perhaps it was the Presbyterians which gave the decorous tone to the early summer colony; or perhaps the wave of new arrivals of German-American extraction, who began moving into the town during the same era, brought a class of solid-citizen types to town; for whatever reason, the recorded memories of early Blowing Rock seem pale beside those left from the more boisterous past of Boone, the county's largest town and seat of government.³⁷

At the same time the Presbyterians were making their bid to form a church in Blowing Rock, a similar effort was underway by the German Reformed Church. In 1882, the same year Mrs. Stewart's letter was published, the Reverend John Ingle, of that denomination, preached a sermon at the Blowing Rock home of Jacob Kluttz, a recent arrival from the German settled area of Rowan or Caldwell counties. Seeing the need for a minister's services, Ingle moved his family up the mountain the following April and "at once began to hold services in a school house at the location of the present village and organized a Sunday School." By 1884, Ingle had convinced the North Carolina Classis (the Reformed equivalent of the Presbyterian Synod, a statewide organization or "court" of clergy and lay elders) to support a "Watauga Mission." Thus a congregation "Calvinistic in faith and Presbyterian in church government," as Dr. Rumble said of this denomination, was already being formed in the mid-1880's.³⁸

Perhaps these concurrent efforts spurred Rumble on; in any event, at the fall 1885 meeting of presbytery, things began moving more rapidly. On October 15, the Committee on Home Missions "was directed to consider the propriety and means of erecting a Presbyterian chapel at Blowing Rock in Watauga Co." The next day, pre-

sumably after much prayer and deliberation by the committee, the full court agreed to "look with favor upon the scheme" and to provide \$150 toward the project when the remainder of the funds had been raised by other contributors. The following March the committee met to appoint the Rev. C. A. Munroe and Captain E. W. Fawcette of Lenoir to "undertake at once the erection of a church building at Blowing Rock" and requested presbytery to apply the \$50 already raised for a church at Jefferson (which had folded five years earlier) to the Blowing Rock cause. Supply ministers, including Rumble, were appointed for the summer of 1886, who were to be entertained "as far as practicable" by the Lenoir men and their travel expenses defrayed by whatever collections were obtained at the services.³⁹

At its April 1886 meeting, presbytery approved the committee's report. Work on the building probably began that spring. It must have proceeded rapidly. The chapel was small, of simple frame construction, with a tower whose bell reportedly could be heard for two miles in every direction. Its total cost was \$677.93. According to the 1936 history, "the whole community united in the erection of the church, but the local contributions, material, etc., were not at the time noted." Munroe's account to presbytery in April 1887 did note that "proprietors of B. R. Hotel and others did gratuitous hauling," indicating that the Blowing Rock hotel, which opened in 1888 and stood at the south end of Main Street for many years, must also have been under construction that summer. Other gifts to furnish the building were recorded: a Bible from Miss Lizzie Kerr, a hymn book by ladies of the Salisbury church, organ by Mrs. Rumble, pulpit lamps by a Mrs. and Miss Pegram, communion service by the Rev. B. L. Beall, two pulpit chairs by Mrs. Stewart, lumber for the pulpit by Capt. W. W. Lenoir, and hymnbooks by the publication committee of the denomination. Except for Mrs. Stewart, all these people seem to have been affiliated with either the Salisbury or the Lenoir churches, an important indication of the network of support which helped sustain the fledgling mountain mission during its early years. Some of these items remain at the church to this day: the large pulpit Bible, the pulpit, possibly the chairs, and perhaps the organ. It is unlikely that the original bell was moved to the present structure, but its ringing of the eleven o'clock hour every Sunday morning carries on a one hundred year-old custom.⁴⁰

The fourth Sunday in July, 1886, was a great day for organized religion in Blowing Rock. On the very same day Rumble and others dedicated the new Presbyterian chapel, the Reformed congregation was organizing, in a building called the "Estes Schoolhouse." The

Mount Bethel house of worship was probably not built until 1894;⁴¹ but when it was organized in 1886 the Reformed congregation was twice the size (sixteen) of the Presbyterian flock of a year later. Were the two denominations competing for members? Probably not. A list of the first Reformed communicants shows a preponderance of names of German origin: Holshousers, Kluttzes, Lentzes, Trexlers, Bollingers. Descendants of most of these families would later join Rumble Church, but at first the new arrivals seem to have been loyal to denominational ties, and perhaps patterns of organized worship, inherited from earlier generations at places in the western Piedmont, especially Rowan County. And while the first regular Presbyterian membership also seems to have been recruited largely among newcomers to the county, several factors probably accounted for the success of the Presbyterians: first, there was the support from the Lenoir Church, which, although sporadic to begin with, at least gave the little flock a connection to a larger statewide and regional structure of organization than was available to the Reformed membership. Then there was the summer resident support: the increasingly numerous, and more affluent, seasonal visitors swelled the ranks of worshippers and allowed a larger base of financial undergirding. The more central location of the Presbyterian chapel also likely favored its more rapid growth. A final factor was undoubtedly the arrival in 1897 of the young Edgar Tufts, whose energy and devotion to his work spilled over the Grandfather and touched Blowing Rock.

In the end, these advantages outweighed the early and earnest effort at the Reformed Church. In 1900 Ingle gave his occupation to census takers as "farmer": he probably preached only part-time and received little income from his churchly duties. The congregation was "irregularly supplied" from year to year through the next two decades by at least six other ministers. Its only regular pastoral care after the fall of 1903 came from a missionary from Lenoir. Membership in 1911 was listed as thirteen. In 1912, the Rev. and Mrs. Ingle joined the Rumble congregation, although he still was listed as of 1917 in the Reformed Church's statistical reports as "without charge" and living in Green Park. In 1919, at the age of eighty-four, he reportedly preached for a year at the Blowing Rock Baptist Church until a new minister could be found. The Reformed congregation itself "was unfortunately lost to the denomination in 1921 when only four members were reported."⁴²

By the time of the July 1886 dedication service the little Presbyterian chapel still lacked "brick pillars and an enclosure to make the job complete."⁴³ No matter the state of the structure, it must have resounded that Sunday with the full force of Rumble's formidable ora-

torical skills, and Mrs. Rumple's applying of her musical talents to the little pump organ. The sermon would later be remembered as a prophecy of the church's success. Rumple took his text from Psalm 72:16—"There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains. The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon and they of the city shall flourish." Rumple could not have anticipated how Lebanon itself would shake quite literally by the 1980's. But he demonstrated his faith in the "handful of corn" being sowed in his beloved mountains. Later that summer, supplies appointed by presbytery took their turns filling the new pulpit: the Rev. J. M. Wharey on the first and second Sundays in August, and Munroe on the fifth Sunday. It is not clear if the Rev. Beall preached as he was appointed to, on the third and fourth Sundays.⁴⁴ To further insure the harvest, Rumple and Munroe arranged to conduct "a protracted meeting at Blowing Rock, including the 5th Sabbath of October." No doubt it was hoped that all these efforts would bring in enough new members to keep the new work going. Formal organization would await the results of these labors in the following year.

The Presbyterians' chapel was almost finished—indeed, it had already been dedicated—before the land on which it stood was officially signed over to them. The deed to the property was dated October 23, 1886. Witnessed by Joe B. Clark(e), justice of the peace and later the town's first mayor, it conveyed to the new church's trustees the land "Beginning at a sugar maple on the West side of the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike Road" and bordered by property of the Morrisises on one side and H. F. Schenck on the other. The lot contained "seven tenths of an acre, more or less" and was to be "for the only use and behoof of said church forever." An interesting confirmation of the legal status of women in that era was that Clark was required to examine Mrs. Morris separately from her husband "tending to her voluntary execution" of the property deed and to certify that she "signed freely and voluntarily without fear or compulsion of her said husband or any other person and that she doth voluntarily assent thereto."⁴⁵

It would be helpful to know just how and when the Morrisises were persuaded to donate the lot. One clue might be found in the fact that during the same month in which the Presbyterians got their lot for free, the Morrisises were selling lots to several private buyers, among

whom were Martin and Rumble. On October 6, the Colonel bought a half-acre from them, for \$100, on the east side of the "Turnpike Road." Then on October 23, the preacher secured a lot of similar size across the street, close to the church property, for \$50. Also that day David A. Atwell of Rowan County, and Dr. Frank A. Shaffner of Forsyth County, bought tracts of about the same size, for \$100 and \$50 respectively. Perhaps these land sales sweetened the pot, or satisfied the Morris'es' need for some immediate cash. Two years later, the couple also sold "for \$1" a one-fourth acre tract to trustees for the Protestant Episcopal Church, diocese of North Carolina, who also got another one-fourth acre from S. M. and Emma S. Clarke, for the erection of an Episcopal house of worship. The Morris'es thus were benefactors of two churches, but the Presbyterians ultimately obtained their membership; they joined in 1891. Later they left the county and moved "east of the Blue Ridge."⁴⁶

The first trustees of the church property were all prominent Presbyterians from Lenoir: the Rev. Benjamin Leander Beall, his brother Dr. Robert Lamar Beall, and Capt. E. W. Fawcette. Beall had helped organize the Lenoir church in 1852, and had served that congregation as stated supply from 1879 to 1882. He was twice evangelist for Concord Presbytery, 1868-1872 and 1883-1888. Nearly sixty years old in 1886, he was injured two years later in a railroad accident while returning from a preaching appointment in Burke County and had to give up his post. He "had the unique privilege of reading his own obituary" when his death was at first reported after the wreck. He lived on until his eighty-sixth year, but "never ceased to suffer bodily pain." It was said of him when he died in 1913 that he and the Rev. Jesse Rankin of Lenoir (one of Rankin's daughters was Beall's first wife, and a niece was married to Rumble) were "the pioneers of Presbyterian Evangelism in Western North Carolina." Laboring mainly in the mountains, he preached "in season and out of season, in log school houses, in store buildings and in private homes from house to house" over territory from Ashe to Macon counties. "Eternity alone will reveal the full fruitage of the good seed he scattered in that large territory of Gospel destitution," C. A. Munroe recalled. He also thought Beall to be "thoroughly orthodox, . . . perhaps the most conservative preacher on all points of Christian doctrine and church polity in Concord Presbytery."⁴⁷

The other Lenoir trustees, both laymen, were long active in the life of the church there as members of the session, the Sunday school, and various other boards and committees. Robert Lamar Beall was a physician, Edward William Fawcette an educator. The latter was in turn a

founder of the Patterson School, president of Concord Female College and Statesville Female College, and a school in Johnson City, Tennessee. He ended his career as head of Finley High School in Lenoir.⁴⁸ The names of these three men were listed as the trustees of the Blowing Rock church property until 1954.

By the end of summer, 1886, the new church was clearly functioning. To insure its continued operation, presbytery arranged that over the winter of 1886–1887 Munroe “be appointed to preach one Sabbath each month at the Blowing Rock Chapel, . . . his churches agreeing thereto, and that the Home Mission Committee supply Mr. Munroe’s pulpit during his absence at Blowing Rock. . . .” Further, it placed the “the Blowing Rock Chapel and Sabbath School . . . under the care of the Lenoir Session until a minister is appointed to that field.” Munroe was also given “commission to receive members and organize a church, if the way be clear.” This arrangement was renewed the following spring for the months of April, May, and June 1887.⁴⁹

Rumple, too, probably returned to preach in the summer of 1887. The mountains were certainly on his mind that year. It was the semi-centennial of Davidson’s founding, and Rumple was on the campus to give the historical address. In flowery rhetoric he compared the college, as a “fountain of pure learning,” to the “head-springs of the four noble rivers, the Yadkin, the Catawba, the Watauga, and the Great Kanawha, streams that diverge to the four quarters of the earth” from their origins at Blowing Rock, “the towering apex of eastern America.”⁵⁰

Colin Alexander Munroe had a long and honorable career in the Presbyterian Church, U.S. Born at Troy, N.C., in 1844, he was the eldest of three preacher brothers, all of whom attended Davidson College and Union Seminary. C. A. graduated in 1872 at Davidson and in 1876 at Union. Munroe was already a veteran of the Confederate Army before he started college; he must have taken classes there under that other old soldier, Col. Martin. He later was a member of the college’s board of trustees. His *alma mater* awarded him the D.D. degree in 1915, and he died at Davidson four years later.

Licensed in Fayetteville Presbytery upon completing his seminary studies, Munroe briefly supplied two churches there, then was called to Mississippi, where he was ordained in 1877. In 1883, he returned to Concord Presbytery as evangelist for its “Western Field.” Working out of the newly-organized church at Old Fort, he fulfilled these duties for at least one year. Then in 1884 he moved to Huntington, West Virginia, for reasons unknown, and was called by the church there in 1885. At the same time, he held a call to the Lenoir and Hickory churches. “It

was the call of these two churches [that] he accepted, and he was received back into Concord Presbytery on June 19, 1885." From then until 1903, he served the Lenoir charge (the Hickory church received its own full-time pastor in 1891). In that year Concord Presbytery again named him evangelist. He took up residence in Hickory and resumed his travels, resigning in 1917 due to ill health.

Munroe held the second-longest pastorate in the history of the Lenoir church. His recollections of activities there, some of which were published in that church's history, gave insight into what worship was like in that era, and as the church was so close geographically and organizationally to the fledgling congregation in Blowing Rock, they described what must have been similar practices at both churches. Because some of the Lenoir members also made a habit of spending summers in the mountains (one thinks of the Harpers, probably also the S. M. Clarkes, and somewhat later the Bernhards), they would themselves have shared in them.⁵¹

"Communion Days" were impressive, awe-inspiring occasions and usually lasted for a weekend. Wine was served to all in one special chalice reserved for the occasions. . . . We see the gatherings of the little group—friends coming in from the country and staying at least through the weekend—the McGalliards, the Corpenings, Greys, Abernathys, Dicksons, Glasses and others. . . . There was heart-searching preaching, usually by a visiting minister. There was the opening of the doors of the church and always a pointed and evangelistic appeal. And then when Sunday came, there was the white table spread in the early morning hours, which on other Sabbaths was taken by Sunday School. Students . . . had given up their usual Friday evening social and as the hour for the observance of the Sacrament drew nigh, it was as though a spirit of reverence and of loving awe walled the quiet streets and country roads. The sermon and then the call separated the communicants from the non-professing Christians. The little organ was silenced and Captain Faucette [sic] 'raised the tune[.]' Always it was 'T'was on That Dark and Doleful Night,' sung to the minor strains of 'Windham.' . . . The service closed with the singing of 'Home Sweet Home . . . Prepare me, dear Saviour, for Heaven, my home.'

It was Munroe who, in the summer of 1887, returned up the mountain to organize the church at Blowing Rock. At the fall meeting of presbytery, in Newton, he reported he had completed his appointed task on July 17. He had enrolled eight charter members:

Mrs. Rosa Watkins, by letter
Miss Sarah Walser, by examination

Mrs. Mary Ann Patterson, by examination
 Mr. Spurgeon Walser, by examination
 Mrs. Martha Walser, by letter
 Samuel J. Walser, by examination
 Miss Mary Walser, by letter, Baptist
 Mr. Arthur Parks, by letter.

Nothing is known of Watkins, Patterson, or Parks. They must not have lived long in the community, as they were not there in 1880 and were gone by 1900. But the Walsers do appear on the 1900 census for the town; many of their descendants lived in Blowing Rock in later generations, and were active at Rumble Church; at least one of their descendants, Paul Walser, attends currently. Spurgeon Walser and his wife, Martha, both fifty years old, had been married twenty-three years as of 1887. Two of their children, still living at home as of 1900, joined the church with them: Mary was eighteen, Samuel was ten. Sarah may have been another daughter, or, if she was incorrectly recorded as "Miss," their daughter-in-law, the twenty year-old wife of William Walser, head of one of two other Walser families in town; these men, William and David, were probably also Spurgeon and Martha's children. Martha gave birth to her last child, Robert, in April of 1888. As of 1887 there would have been another little girl, Annie, age three, as yet too young to join the church. Both these would join Rumble in 1899; "Rob" Walser would spend many of his adult years as Sunday school superintendent during the 1940's.⁵²

Other additions to the membership came in the next two years; perhaps Rumble or Munroe held more "protracted meetings." Mrs. Willie Clark, Rufus Brady, and Mrs. M. J. Brady joined by letter from other Presbyterian churches (place or places unknown). Mrs. Brady was likely the boarding house keeper with whom Rumble is reported to have stayed in the summer of 1889; neither the Bradys nor Mrs. Clark appear on the 1900 census. Not until 1891 were more names put on the rolls. The Rev. R. P. Pell, synodical evangelist, and Munroe at that time added the previously-mentioned Morrisises, their daughter, Bessie, who would have been fourteen, and E. (Edward?) G. Morris, listed on the 1900 census as a carpenter with six children. E. G. Morris's wife, Doxy, joined the church the next month. Perhaps he was a grown son of William and Edith. Also joining the fold were E. (Elcana) G. Clure (Clewer, on the census returns), age 61, a farm laborer, and his wife, Martha, age 47; Mrs. Martha Kershea; Mrs. Martha Kirby (not found on the 1900 census); and H. W. Weedon (Weeden). Mrs. Mary W. Weedon also joined, "by letter from the Methodist church."⁵³

And so the efforts of Emma Stewart and her friends had borne fruit. A church had been planted in a "destitute region." It was the only church Concord Presbytery organized that year, though more were to follow. Like many country churches, it had no regular pastor. Services were held rarely, if at all, through the winter, perhaps almost weekly during the summer if Rumble or other ministers were in town. There is no way to know how often Munroe rode up the mountain from Lenoir, or how scrupulously the Lenoir session cared for the little flock's needs. Session minutes of the Lenoir church never mention Blowing Rock through this period. No local session (that is, lay elders) to conduct church business was at this time provided: the few original members could hardly have made one up, especially since women, six of the eight, were not then permitted to hold church office. The records hint at a Sunday school, but give no indication of attendance, names of teachers, or any other such data for the period. All the evidence points to the fact that Blowing Rock was a transitional type of church, more a convenience for the summer people who had church homes elsewhere than a truly local one. For a decade the church would struggle along, adding a few members when a visiting preacher would enroll them. Munroe seems to have severed his relationship with Blowing Rock in 1891 when he took full-time charge of the Lenoir congregation; in 1892 a presbytery report indicated the Blowing Rock pulpit was vacant. Perhaps it was served thereafter only in the summertime, by Rumble or other vacationing preachers, or by an occasional evangelist.⁵⁴ Its success would not be assured until a man arrived, at the start of its second decade, who epitomized a new spirit abroad in mountain missions: Edgar Tufts.

Notes for Chapter One

1. Minutes of Concord Presbytery, Vol. 9, pp. 94–95. Printed copy at The Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Inc., Montreat, NC. Xeroxed copies of the printed and the original handwritten minutes are in the RMPC records.

2. Watauga County Court House, Register of Deeds Office. On the Stewarts: oral interviews with Helen Hartley, April 1987; Julia Keys Williams, April 1987; Jo Greene, July 1987. See also “Music Made Farm House Popular Attraction Here,” and “Around Town,” *The Blowing Rocket*, *The Blowing Rock Story*, special Bicentennial issue (first published July 1976, reissued 1983), pp. 55, 8. Hereinafter cited as *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition. Dr. Chalmers G. Davidson kindly supplied the information concerning “Stuarts Inn”; in 1896–97 students paid \$10 a month to board there.

3. *North Carolina Presbyterian*, October 18, 1882 (New Series, Vol. XV, No. 771), p. 2. Microfilm copy at The Historical Foundation, Montreat.

4. E. C. Clark, comp., *Ministerial Directory of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., 1861–1941* (Austin, TX: Von Boeckmann-Jones, 1942). Later editions by various editors and with different dates of publication. Hereinafter cited as *Ministerial Directory*, and year of edition. Dr. Davidson kindly supplied the dates of Johnston’s service on Davidson College’s board of trustees.

5. I have been unable to locate a settlement or post office in the county named Morris. By the 1880’s there was one called Norris, and another at Moretz’s Mill, both on Meat Camp Creek. But since W. M. Morris took summer boarders, it is possible that the Penicks actually were staying in Blowing Rock. I am grateful to Mrs. Evelyn Shepherd and Mr. Eric Olson for helping my search. The letters cited in these paragraphs have been preserved at the church; they must have come down from the Martin or the Vardell families. Both the Colonel’s son and Rumble’s son-in-law prepared the semicentennial sketch of the church’s history, which referred to the existence of the letters.

6. Mary T. Martin Sloop with Legette Blythe, *Miracle in the Hills* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1953), pp. 11–12. See also Benjamin F. Garrett, “The First Fifty Years of Chemistry at Davidson,” *Briarpatch*, March 1980. The article was researched and written by a chemistry professor at the college.

7. John Preston Arthur, *A History of Watauga County, North Carolina. With Sketches of Prominent Families* (Richmond: Everett Waddey Co., 1915; repr. 1976), p. 251. If Arthur was correct, the Arrowood brothers would have been very young—or the school was being conducted later than he recalled. William Butler and Robert Silvanus Arrowood were born in 1850 and 1854, respectively; both graduated from Davidson College (in 1876 and 1877) and William from Union Theological Seminary in 1879; there is no record that Robert ever attended seminary, although he was licensed and ordained in Concord Presbytery in 1886. E. C. Clark, comp., *Ministerial Directory*, p. 21. See also Neill Roderick McGeachy, *Confronted By Challenge: A History of the Presbytery of Concord 1795–1973* (n.p.: The Delmar Co., 1985) (hereinafter cited as

McGeachy, *Confronted*), p. 389, where he notes that R. S. Arrowood's ordination must have come "under what, today, is called 'extraordinary clause.'"

8. Tribute from the Rev. J. Rumple, D.D., in *The Davidson Monthly* (April 1896), Memorial number to Col. William J. Martin, p. 264.

9. Chalmers G. Davidson, Davidson College press release, "A collection of letters and papers of the William Joseph Martin family . . ." n.d., p. 1.

10. Sloop, *Miracle in the Hills*, p. 20.

11. Hope Summerell Chamberlain, *This Was Home* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1938), pp. 212–220. This section of her book gives an evocative account of what the tiny summer community of Blowing Rock was like, in a child's eyes, at this early date.

12. "Norvell Visit in 1889," *The Blowing Rocket*, special Bicentennial issue (1983 reissue), p. 3. The house Rumple built on Main Street still stands, much remodeled, just north of the Methodist Church, and set well back from the road. The rear of the property must have had a commanding view of the John's River gorge in the early days, since so much of the area had at that time been recently timbered.

13. Jethro Rumple, *The History of Presbyterianism in North Carolina* (Richmond: The Library of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 1966); reprinted from the *North Carolina Presbyterian 1878–1887*; foreword by H. M. Brimm, i. Hereinafter cited as Rumple, *Presbyterianism*. Several short sketches of Rumple's life and career are collected in this volume, pp. iii–xii, 299–302, and have been sources for these paragraphs. I am also grateful to First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury, for allowing me to copy local press clippings describing his death, funeral, and career, which are among the church's historical memorabilia.

14. "Sketch of Author" by Mrs. Linda Rumple Vardell, pp. 13–18, in Jethro Rumple, *A History of Rowan County North Carolina, Containing Sketches of Prominent Families and Distinguished Men* (Salisbury, NC: J. J. Bruner, 1881). Republished by the Elizabeth Maxwell Steele Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1916, 1929. Hereinafter cited as Rumple, *A History*. Rumple wrote this work as a series of serial articles for the *Carolina Watchman*, a Salisbury newspaper with statewide circulation. Another biographical sketch was written about the time of Rumple's death by the Rev. Dr. John B. Shearer of Davidson in Samuel A. Ashe, ed., *Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present* (Greensboro, NC: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1905), III, 375–385. Hereinafter cited as Shearer, "Jethro Rumple."

15. After 1869 both these congregations belonged to Mecklenburg Presbytery. See Rumple's own sketches of these churches' histories in *Presbyterianism*, pp. 50–51 and *passim*.

16. McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 416, citing a member of the Rumple family.

17. *Ibid*, p. 417. Shearer said it was Rumple's "custom to examine his texts in the original Hebrew and Greek languages" and that he was never satisfied

"until he thought he was teaching the people something" from the pulpit: Shearer, "Jethro Rumble," p. 382. Reference furnished by Mrs. Linda Yarnell.

18. The Vardell family has kept an extensive family history and genealogy up to date, most of it the work of Jean Vardell Martin Foil. A copy lent to the author by Linda Yarnell has been helpful for establishing these various family relationships.

19. McGeachy, *Confronted*, pp. 230-263, 296.

20. McGeachy, *Confronted*, pp. 264-292, has interesting documentation of the effects of the defeat upon Concord Presbytery. As an indicator of Rumble's sympathies, it may be noted that when it became necessary to choose a new president of Davidson College in 1866, the Rev. George Wilson McPhail of Norfolk, Va., who had spent the War years in Philadelphia but who was "a Southern man of Southern sympathies," was elected. Rumble, a member of the Davidson Board of Trustees from 1859 until his death in 1906, no doubt had concurred in McPhail's election; *ibid.*, pp. 293-294. At a called General Assembly in Macon, Ga., in December, 1865, Southern Presbyterians renamed their body "The Presbyterian Church in the United States," usually abbreviated PCUS.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 274-276.

22. Josephine Kluttz Krider, *History of the First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury, North Carolina* (hereinafter cited as Krider, *First Church*), p. 55. For evidence of the loss of black membership throughout the denomination, see McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 311. Concord Presbytery's reaction in 1868: "all we can do is wait, until, in the Providence of God, they shall return to the fold from which they have strayed." See also Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterians in The South*, 3 vols. (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963-1973) (hereinafter cited as Thompson, *Presbyterians*), II, 99; he notes that although at the 1866 General Assembly the denomination "recognized that the old relation between master and slave had been overthrown" by the War, the "dogma which asserted the inherent sinfulness of slavery . . . was solemnly declared to be unscriptural and fanatical. . . ."

23. McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 325. For Rumble's activities in this period, see chapters 12 and 13. McGeachy notes however, pp. 319-320, that the miscellaneous records of presbytery are fragmented and mostly lost for the years 1870 to 1937.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 328, 336, 342, 351.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 354-355. Presbytery records show the Jefferson church, founded in 1863, was dissolved in 1880, and its membership transferred to Wilkesboro; *ibid.*, p. 370.

26. J. Rumble, "Presbyterianism in North Carolina, Introductory," January 30, 1878, in Rumble, *Presbyterianism*, p. 1. All citations are to page numbers in the reprint edition; dates are those of original publication.

27. "Aggressiveness," November 6, 1878; Rumble, *History*, pp. 105-107.

28. "Obstacles in the Way of Progress," November 13, 1878; *Ibid.*, pp. 108-111.

29. Rumple also doubted whether the average Presbyterian preacher "as a rule, preaches often enough. The demand of a country church is two sermons a week during summer and once a week in the winter. The town or city preacher is expected to preach twice a week the year round, and to lecture once a week." Preachers, he thought, could re-use their sermons to different audiences, thus "colonizing" for the faith "in destitute neighborhoods, in school houses, and in private dwellings." *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 370. Thompson's otherwise authoritative *Presbyterians*, II, 31, says the North Carolina plan of synodical evangelization was the second in the PCUS, and not adopted until 1889, after the model had been pioneered in Kentucky in 1881. Perhaps it was the absence of the title "synodical evangelist" which led Thompson to overlook the North Carolina effort. His source, David I. Craig, *A History of the Development of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina, and of Synodical Home Missions* (Richmond: Whitet and Shepperson, 1907) is admittedly ambiguous on the subject. According to McGeachy, citing Craig, the Rev. Payne served as synod's "Agent of Evangelistic Labor" until 1884, but the "first synodical evangelist" was the Rev. William D. Morton, who was indeed appointed first in 1889. McGeachy, *Confronted*, pp. 385, 400. The matter is of some importance, as Thompson makes much of the Kentucky example as inspiration throughout the church.

32. Arthur, *History of Watauga County*, p. 218. Census data for 1880 and 1900 from Carl A. Ross, Jr., ed. *1880 Census of Watauga County and 1900 Census of Watauga County* (Boone: Department of History, Appalachian State University, 1983, 1984). Hereinafter cited as Ross, *Census*.

33. Among the pre-War visitors were the G. W. F. Harpers of Lenoir, active Presbyterians and merchant-farmers like the Morrisises. Theirs was apparently the first permanent home built by non-residents in the then-unincorporated village. A descendant of the original Harper is Gwyn Harper of Hickory, a summer member of Rumple Church and quite knowledgeable about the region's early history. Another member of the Harper family, James C. Harper, during the 1840's surveyed what later became the Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike, still later U.S. Highway 321, between Blowing Rock and Lenoir. Another early local worthy who passed through the community before the War was Mrs. William B. (Alice Bostwick) Councill, of Sumter, S.C., who recalled picnicking at The Blowing Rock with her new husband in 1852 and being greeted by two "wild looking" mountain men paying their respects to the young doctor, son of the prominent Boone storekeeper, and his bride. "Harper Recalls Rock When He Was A Boy," and "1852 Trip to Blowing Rock Was Most Dangerous Then," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, pp. 5, 56.

34. Arthur, *History of Watauga County*, p. 218.

35. Ross, *Census*, 1900; "Skyland Memories" and "Community Club History is Given," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, pp. 77, 16; Ruth Vardell Gage

and Gaston Gage, "Blowing Rock Memories, 1899–1975," typescript copy furnished to the author by their son, Charles Vardell Gage (hereinafter cited as Gage-Vardell, "Memories"), no pagination. Another reminiscer, Mrs. C. D. Mackey, interviewed many years ago, believed that the Edwardses "have good claim to the title of founders of the summer colony." "Blowing Rock in 1889," and "Cone Family Left The Mountains A Richer Place," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, pp. 67, 24.

36. "Blowing Rock Was Wild In Early Days," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 66. For the lack of amusements, see Gage-Vardell, "Memories."

37. Arthur's *History of Watauga County* is full of fascinating tales of county families still fighting over grudges dating from the Civil War, kidnappings, and other assorted mayhem in this era. While he hardly wished to perpetuate the stereotype of the feuding mountaineer—he constantly stressed the contributions of upstanding citizens—Arthur could not resist telling a good story.

38. Rumble, *A History*, p. 329. For the account of the Reformed church, later called Mount Bethel: A Board of Editors under The Classis of North Carolina, *Historic Sketch of the Reformed Church in North Carolina, with an introduction by the Late Geo. Wm. Walker, D.D.* (Philadelphia: Publication Board of the Reformed Church in the United States, 1908), pp. 321–323.

39. Minutes of Concord Presbytery, Vol. 8, pp. 834, 860. Rumble was appointed to preach in Blowing Rock the first and second Sabbaths of July and dedicate the church. The Rev. William W. Pharr was scheduled to preach the third and fourth Sundays, but he later reported he did not attend, and his excuse was found satisfactory; presumably it had something to do with the fact that Rumble was staying on to preach the next two Sundays.

It is impossible now to ascertain why Rumble did not dedicate the church on the first or second Sunday of July, 1886; perhaps the building was not ready. There is a slight possibility that the dedication occurred on the third, not the fourth Sunday, since the subsequent entry in presbytery minutes reads simply that "Rev. J. Rumble, D.D. reported that he preached at Blowing Rock on the 3rd and 4th Sabbaths of July [1886] and dedicated the church there according to appointment": *ibid.*, Vol. 9, pp. 2–3. But I take the best source for the dedicatory date of the fourth Sunday in July to be the "1936 History," prepared by Vardell and Martin, both of whom were surely present and who may have had other records upon which to base their recollections. As will be described in chapter three, they arranged to celebrate the church's semicentennial on the anniversary date of the church's dedication, not its organization, and they chose to stress the fourth Sunday in July, 1886, as the appropriate one.

Mrs. Rumble was in the habit of noting in the margin of her Bible, one of which is at RMPC, the texts her husband or some other preacher used for sermons. She made many such entries, usually with a date and sometimes with a place or church at which the sermon was given. The entry beside the text Rumble used at the dedicatory sermon reads, "Blowing Rock dedication of new church J.R. 1887"; this is almost certainly in error; she seems to have added the date later, as the ink appears to be darker.

40. *Ibid.*, Vol. 9, pp. 2-3, 18-23, 51-52. See also "Blowing Rock Hotel Completed In 1888," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 11. The old pump organ, today in the Nebel Sunday School Room at RMPC, is of uncertain origin. It is rather elaborate for the gift of a preacher's wife, and likely dates from a somewhat later time, given perhaps when the stone sanctuary was completed in the early 20th century. The "1936 History" refers to an Esty organ with two banks of keys and pedals "with electric attachment for pumping" given by Jessie Kenan Wise in 1931. It is not known what became of this instrument.

41. Contradictory sources exist for the date of the construction of the Mount Bethel sanctuary. Many old-timers in Blowing Rock have heard that the two churches were built by the same crew and during the same year, 1886. It is hard to imagine how such a well-remembered coincidence can be wrong; but the historian of the North Carolina Classis of the Reformed Church gave the first Sunday in November, 1894, as the structure's dedication date, and named the preacher who gave the sermon: the Rev. J. L. Murphy. The congregation would hardly have waited eight years to dedicate the building. Perhaps what local people remembered was that the Blowing Rock Hotel and the Presbyterian chapel were both under construction that summer of 1886: see above.

42. Classis of North Carolina, *Historic Sketch*, p. 323; Jacob Calvin Leonard, *History of the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church* (Lexington, NC: n.p., 1940). "Around Town," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 28. Another generation of Ingles would be active at Rumble church well into the twentieth century: see chapter three below.

43. Minutes of Concord Presbytery, Vol. 9, pp. 51-52.

44. James Morton Wharey, born in Goochland County, Virginia in 1839, graduated from Hampden Sydney College in 1857, and from Union Theological Seminary in 1862. He was a chaplain with the Confederate army during the war. After serving several pastorates in Virginia he joined Concord Presbytery in 1876. As of the summer of 1886, he was preaching at the Rocky River church, "mother church" of the historic "seven churches of Mecklenburg." Late that year he was called to the Mooresville church, serving until 1905. His last years (1905-1909) were spent as stated supply to the Hickory and Taylorsville churches. *Ministerial Directory*, 1942 edition. Wharey had been the appointed alternate to the Rev. J. A. Ramsey, pastor at Thyatira and Back Creek churches, who informed presbytery that Wharey, not he, had been to Blowing Rock. Others who had been designated to fill the Blowing Rock pulpit that summer either did not attend (William M. Pharr was excused) or did not report: B.L. Beall and Pharr's alternate, W.A. Wood. Minutes of Concord Presbytery, Vol. 9, pp. 2-3. For more on Beall, see below.

45. Watauga County Court House, Register of Deeds Office; copy in RMPC church records.

46. Watauga County Court House, Register of Deeds Office; Session Records, Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church (hereinafter cited as RMPC session records); Arthur, *A History of Watauga County*, p. 218. An undated,

pencilled notation in the earliest record book at RMPC says the Morris moved to Hudson. Acquisition of land was a problem in the tightly-knit town. Dr. Vardell in 1936 recalled that fifty years previously only four or five families had owned all the suitable building sites in the village, and no member of these was connected with the Presbyterian church. "History of the Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church, Blowing Rock, N.C., Compiled by Rev. C. G. Vardell, D. D. and Dr. W. J. Martin, D. D., L.L. D., Read at the Semicentennial of the Church, July 26, 1936 . . .," pp. 1-2. Hereinafter cited as "1936 History."

47. McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 413; Minutes of Concord Presbytery, stated meeting of April 1913, pp. 177-179. Nancy Alexander, *History of the First Presbyterian Church of Lenoir* (Lenoir: The Printing House, 1976), no pagination.

48. Nancy Alexander, *Here Will I Dwell: The Story of Caldwell County* (n.p.: the author, 1956), pp. 114-116; tributes *in memoriam* to R.L. Beall, 1891, and E.W. Fawcette, 1901, First Presbyterian Church, Lenoir, NC, *Minutes of Session & Register*, 2 vols.

49. Minutes of Concord Presbytery, Vol. 9, pp. 18-20, 22-23, 59. Although no record exists that the Lenoir Session ever voted on, or even discussed, these matters, the formalities seem to have mattered less than the facts. In the "1936 History," p. 3, Munroe is said to have fulfilled his duties at Blowing Rock until 1891.

50. Address by the Rev. Jethro Rumble, in *Semi-Centenary Addresses*, Davidson College, 1887, p. 69. I am indebted to Dr. Chalmers Davidson for bringing this reference to my attention.

51. Alexander, *History of the First Presbyterian Church of Lenoir*, no page numbering; McGeachy, *Confronted*, pp. 383-384 and *passim*.; *Ministerial Directory*, 1942 edition.

52. Ross, *Census*, 1900, pp. 92, 94, 101. More members of the Walser family would join in 1900: Mr. and Mrs. Will Walser. RMPC Session Records, Munroe-Tufts book, pp. 5-6. According to the memory of Hattie Brown, the Walsers had taken the initiative locally to establish the church: oral interview, July 1987.

53. There are discrepancies among the old record books at the church, the earliest of which has been recopied, and perhaps corrected, at least once. I have tried to reconcile the records, but some confusion exists, most glaringly between the report Munroe submitted to Presbytery and the oldest record book, presumably in his handwriting, and continued by Edgar Tufts, which is at the RMPC. The book shows only six, not eight, charter members: Mary and Samuel Walser are not listed. A later entry in Tufts's handwriting shows Mary Walser joined in May, 1899. A David Walser joined in June, 1891, with a later, pencilled entry showing that he some time subsequently "went back to the

Baptist Church." One woman member is reported to have been "dismissed for immorality" at some point in Tufts's time.

54. A Home Missions report to Concord Presbytery in 1894 reported a \$125 disbursement to the "Blowing Rock field," perhaps to pay summer supply pastors. A report on Sabbath Schools indicated four teachers and forty "scholars" on the roll at Blowing Rock where, since there was no session, the Sabbath school was reported only to be "under Presbyterian influences." *Minutes of Concord Presbytery*, stated meeting of spring 1894, pp. 13-14.

This page intentionally left blank

2

The Tufts Era, 1897-1923

LOOKING BACK FROM about 1890, a man like Jethro Rumble must have been dissatisfied with the limited success of the Presbyterian home mission effort in North Carolina since the Civil War. A modest number of new churches had been added, but most of them, especially in the Western end of the state, were small and weak, and of course poor. Experiments like the "clusters" of churches Rumble had suggested in the 1870's had not worked out well. Presbytery had appointed roving evangelists to work full time in the field, but they had too many miles to cover, got little pay for their work, and must have been easily discouraged; turnover in the post was relatively frequent. During the late 1880's and early 1890's, in another unsuccessful effort at reorganization, some of the mountain counties were briefly reassigned to presbyteries centered in the more easterly parts of the state, presumably in the hope that mission activity would find a broader base of support from more established pastors and congregations there. This experiment, too, was soon abandoned. Synod evangelists, who began to work in the early 1880's, with the entire state to cover, naturally appeared infrequently in any one area.¹

Still groping for an effectual method of work, Synod in 1891 named three evangelists, each of whom was assigned a more restricted region; one of these was the Rev. Robert Payne Pell, who was sent to Mitchell and Watauga Counties. As Avery County was not created until 1911, out of Mitchell and Watauga, Pell's field was still quite large. He traveled hundreds of miles over the next four years, mostly on horseback. The first Presbyterian church in Mitchell, at Elk Park, was organized through his efforts in 1891. But times were tight: a recession began in 1892 and deepened in 1893. And his duties were draining: Pell reported during 1894 that he had regularly served four churches (Blowing Rock would have been one), five "mission points" (which would have included

Banner Elk), 162 communicants, four Sabbath Schools with 275 pupils and seven teachers, and three prayer meetings; he had performed 45 baptisms, added 68 new members, and collected \$787 "for church and school purposes." It is not clear where Pell had his base of operations in the mountains, or even whether he stayed all winter, during his four years of labor.²

Pell also promoted for a while, probably with Rumble's backing,³ a scheme to establish schools for girls at Blowing Rock and at the newly created lumbering and resort town of Linville. Nothing seems to have come from these plans, even though Pell said he had private local pledges for land and materials. Presbytery sent a team to Linville to follow up on the idea, but would promise no money, and the whole project soon died. At Blowing Rock, W. M. Morris had apparently been persuaded by his Presbyterian friends to donate a site for an educational enterprise to rival the Skyland Institute, founded in 1887 by Emily Prudden. The Institute, not a Presbyterian venture, was already flourishing by then; perhaps fortunately for the cause of education, Prudden was left without competition at this time. She later turned over her work to the American Missionary Union.⁴

But Pell's interest in education was a straw in the wind; for throughout the denomination, as well as across North Carolina, the concern for planting schools was becoming as real as the concern for planting churches. Public education in the Southern states, generally out-classed by denominational schools before the War, was, during Reconstruction, even more poorly supported, and the school terms short. Before the turn of the century there were no reported twelve-year schools anywhere in the state. What was true even in most towns went double for the country regions.⁵

Synod took up the issue of "The Church and Christian Education" at its 1891 meeting. Closer home in Concord Presbytery, a special committee which included Pell and Munroe, as well as ruling elder G. W. F. Harper of Lenoir, prepared a report which noted that, although the public schools "are mainly conducted by Christian teachers, a fair proportion of whom are Presbyterians," and in most "the Bible is read at the opening of school, with prayer for God's blessing," some schools neglected these routines. None used the Bible as a textbook, or required study of the Shorter Catechism.⁶ Preparing students for higher learning, and providing it, were traditional Presbyterian concerns, since the church needed an educated ministry. The report thus pointed out to praise several schools and academies in the bounds of presbytery which functioned as feeder schools to the church's colleges. But increasingly, "parochial schools and academies" were being seen as

important ancillaries to the larger work of the church, especially in the remote mountain regions.

The interest which Synod and presbytery showed in Pell's efforts in Blowing Rock and Linville was one sign of this newer, wider concern, even though those plans came to naught. Another was the increased number of laymen and laywomen who by the end of the century were spending summers in isolated rural areas, supplementing the meager public educational effort and giving Christian instruction. Such teaching was carried out under denominational auspices, though often at the volunteers' own expense. It would take the explicit combination of these two responsibilities, teaching and preaching, soon to find ideal personification in one remarkable man, to give new vigor to the church's mountain work.⁷

In the fall of 1894 Munroe, by then fifty years old, tried to resign as chairman of presbytery's home missions committee. He was refused. His full-time obligations at the Lenoir church, coupled with the continued shortfalls of financial support for his committee's work, may have prompted his request. Pell, perhaps also weary of his work, accepted a call to a church in South Carolina in January, 1895. Concord Presbytery had previously discussed without result appointing an assistant for him; now his departure left the whole Mitchell and Watauga field uncovered. But that spring a young worker, supported temporarily by both Synod and Presbytery, came from Union Theological Seminary to labor at Banner Elk. It was the first arrival in the mountains of Edgar Tufts. He was a man after Rumple's and Munroe's own heart.⁸

"I reached Lenoir last Friday afternoon. Mr. Munroe, the Chairman of the Committee which I am to work under, met me at the depot. He was very kind to me, and as soon as I got the soot and smoke washed off, he took me around to meet 'wife material' as he expressed it." So Tufts wrote on Monday, May 13, 1895, to Mary Elizabeth Hall, the woman who three years later would become his wife. On Saturday, the Lenoir pastor and the seminary student rode to Blowing Rock. "On our way, we got caught in a rainstorm but did not get very wet. It took the whole day to get to our destination on account of the rough mountain road." In the evening, "to a small congregation," and again on the following day, Munroe had Tufts preach his first sermons in Blowing Rock.

I was never more surprised than I was when I saw the place. I thought my work would be almost altogether among country people. But Blowing Rock has four or five large hotels and they say that sometimes there are as many as a thousand people there, from all parts of the country. There are not many visitors there now, however. They will begin to come next month.

That same Sunday afternoon Tufts got his first taste of the freakish weather at the Rock. He and Munroe "went out to call on some people and before we got in again we were caught in a *snow* storm! Fortunately for me I had my coat on and we were near enough to a house to get shelter." The temperature dropped below freezing that night, Tufts reported, "although the fruit, of which there seems to be no end, was not killed."⁹ The next morning Munroe returned to Lenoir. Tufts went on to Banner Elk, "further up the mountains from Blowing Rock," by himself that Monday. He found the scenery "perfectly grand" and "enjoyed the ride very much" but thought it "very cold this morning until about twelve o'clock." A postscript on his letter to Bessie the next day added that "the mountains have considerable snow on them this morning, and the wind is whistling like mad. Am afraid I will miss the fruit which I was expecting."

Munroe had taken Tufts the long way to his charge. As Tufts noted, the train came in to Elk Park from Johnson City, Tennessee, just eight miles from Banner Elk. But Tufts was grateful for the chance on the long ride to hear from the older preacher "all about the work." It was not so extensive as Pell's had been. Another seminary student was working in Mitchell County that summer. Still, Tufts was to be the only Presbyterian preacher in Watauga County; he was twenty-four and had only one year of seminary training. He was to preach at three locations: twice a month at Banner Elk, once at Blowing Rock, and once "at a place sixteen miles from here, called Cove Creek." Tufts told "Miss Bessie" he found Banner Elk much as he expected it, an "average country village," and he anticipated Cove Creek to be "a very rough place." But Blowing Rock, being a "regular fashionable summer resort," was a place "where I will have to do my best." He sent her "a little prospectus of Blowing Rock, which will give you a faint idea of that vicinity."¹⁰ Such was the beginning of the little preacher's mountain work.

Tufts was born in Kirkwood, Georgia, five years after the close of the Civil War. He was one of six children. His mother's precarious health (she had never fully recovered from the privations of the war years) led the family to move to rural Maitland, in central Florida, when Edgar was still small; here his mother died of tuberculosis when he was

twelve. His daughter has traced his later concern for the sick and lonely to the boy's early experiences. Perhaps his first contact with, and openness to, outside tourists also came from these early years, as Maitland was by then attracting a small colony of winter visitors, including a New York woman who became a sort of foster mother to the young boy.¹¹ Tufts may also have inherited something else from his weakened mother: he, too, later developed a tubercular condition which claimed his life at age fifty-two.

The young Tufts entered Washington and Lee College, Virginia, "with \$50.00 in his pocket" in 1889. From his birth his parents had wanted him to become a minister. "It was his mother's request as she gave her children her final good-bye on this earth."¹² Accordingly, he and a childhood friend from Maitland, while roommates at Washington and Lee, were taken under the care of St. John's Presbytery, Florida, as candidates for the ministry. Tufts graduated from college in 1894 and entered Union Theological Seminary at Hampden-Sydney that fall. He returned a few days late to seminary at the opening of the 1895 term, in order to stay and finish the roof on the little church he started in Banner Elk that summer. He came back the next summer and was warmly received. Under his leadership in 1896 the building was completed and dedicated (Munroe came to preach the sermon), an organ installed, the school improved and its enrollment added to. As water to a dry land, Tufts's work was slaking a thirst for the gospel, and for learning, among a small but growing body of followers. He was even able to organize a literary society in the tiny, distant town.¹³

President of Union Seminary in that era was the Reverend Dr. Walter W. Moore, a native Charlottean, who among his duties had to help find various appointments for his students. Summer work in home missions was considered good preparation for later ministerial responsibilities; it was also a source of low-paid manpower for the manifold projects the church took on but for which full time funding was hard to find. Such field work probably also weeded out the less-committed from the ministry. It turned out to be for Tufts the finding of his life's calling. Moore, Tufts reminded him later, was the first to give his name to Munroe's committee as one "who had the qualifications needed for the pioneering and constructive work then called for in our North Carolina mountains." Moore visited Banner Elk some years later to marvel at all Tufts had accomplished. He had, he said, "unquestionably made the right suggestion," and gave "thanks to God for His guiding hand in the matter."¹⁴

Relatively little is known of Tufts's early years of service in Blowing Rock. Not until 1898 were any new members enrolled at the Blowing

Rock chapel, probably because until Concord Presbytery ordained him “as an evangelist” in 1897, he would not have been permitted to perform such tasks. In March, 1898, several additional members of the Weedon family were received into the church: Anna, Clarence, and Dea, while Alva and Eleaza Weedon were baptized. More members of the Walser household joined the next year: Mary, Robert, Clara, and Annie, while Mr. and Mrs. Will Walser were added in 1900. There were others: Maggie Leadford, Melvin Cox, Mrs. A. M. Critcher, Mrs. and Mrs. John Springs, Ola Pendley, W. G. Hall, W. W. Sherrill, M. E. Johnson. By 1905, when work began on the stone church building, Tufts had added twenty-eight to the fellowship. Several of these also received baptism. Since Presbyterian practice is to accept into full communion any baptized believer who professes faith in Christ, these individuals would have never been baptized in any other church. The little congregation was growing slowly, even though Tufts visited it only once a month.

According to his daughter, Tufts lived all one winter in Blowing Rock early in his career, about 1903. Perhaps some of his parishioners in Blowing Rock hoped he would move his operations permanently. But by that date the school at Banner Elk was taking more and more of his time and energy. It ran from April to December, so that he was able to leave that work for a winter; but the support he had slowly and painfully gathered there may have seemed to him more precarious and more demanding of his attention.¹⁵

One of the active church families in those early years, whose descendants still attend Rumble church frequently in the summers, were the Weedons. W. H. Weedon’s youngest daughter, Helen, now Mrs. Karl Deaton of Statesville, was perhaps the first infant Tufts baptized in the still-uncompleted stone sanctuary, in April, 1906. She recalled that her father had first come to Blowing Rock to find timber for his business in Newton. Already well along in years, Weedon not only found timber, but a growing little town to his liking. Soon he moved his much younger, second wife, Mary, and his family up the mountain. He built “Fairview,” the well-named house which still stands, overlooking the John’s River gorge and commanding one of the finest views of Grandfather Mountain anywhere in Blowing Rock. The prominent, ancient granite outcropping on his property became a surveyor’s benchmark for much of the west side of town as it began to be platted in 1887.¹⁶ Tufts made the Weedon household a regular stopover on his monthly rides to Blowing Rock, often staying overnight as a guest in the main house. Little Helen Weedon always looked forward to his visits: not

only was he a welcome source of outside news and a pastoral solace, he was a warm, loving presence to the children.

In winter, Tufts bundled himself for the ride from Banner Elk in a heavy woollen poncho or cloak and a wide-brimmed hat. He and his horse sometimes arrived almost unrecognizable, covered head to foot with ice and snow. In better weather and later years, Tufts sometimes brought over his wife, Bessie, whom he had married in 1898, or one or more of their children: Edgar H. and Margaret (a third, a daughter, died in her teens). The ride over the mountain, usually by way of Foscoe and Shulls Mills, sometimes through Valle Crucis, was regularly on the fourth Saturday of the month. Visiting isolated cabins along the way, he spent the night in Blowing Rock with the Weedons, or later the Holshousers, or other church families. Some youth activity or social probably took up that evening. His Sunday services would have been sparsely but faithfully attended in winter. In the summer season, they would have drawn larger crowds. Tufts no doubt also oversaw and taught classes in the Sunday school. According to a historical sketch prepared in 1937 by the Women of the Church, Mrs. W. L. Holshouser was for many years the superintendent of the Sunday school, which "has functioned almost continually" since 1897 "due to interest of members and visitors."¹⁷ Helen Weedon Deaton and others remember that the entire community went to Sunday school and worshipped at whatever church had a preacher on any Sunday: by the 1910's, the Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians were also being served monthly, at least in the summer, by some clergyman. Presbyterians followed this practice at least until the arrival of their first full-time pastor in 1931.

One living resident member's memories stretch back to Edgar Tufts's time, and the original frame church in which his ministry began. Mrs. Charles F. (Hattie) Brown, now ninety-one, one of six children of Charles S. and Nancy Ann Young, remembers being taken as a child to a Christmas service, through a snowstorm, with woollen socks pulled up over their shoes to keep them dry. A large Christmas tree, lighted with candles, stood in the corner of the church. That service included a poem recited by her brother, Paul: for his performance his father rewarded him a silver dollar. Her family considered Edgar Tufts a special friend; he later recruited Hattie and her sister, Rose, for his fledgling school for girls at Lees-McRae.¹⁸

Some of Tufts's sermon notes have survived, tucked in a Bible still at Rumble Church. He wrote them on whatever odd scraps of paper came to hand: the backs of letters, envelopes, or circulars received at the school. One set of notes from the 1920's is written on a piece of W. L.

Holshouser's letterhead stationery, which carried the printed notice "General Merchandise, Produce, Coffins, Caskets." That sermon dealt with "The Dignity of Man." Most of the outlines are brief, giving little clue to what filled out his main points. Some very early notes, pencilled on a mailing envelope from the Coca-Cola Company of Atlanta post-marked in 1897, have to do with *Giving*. They read:

Universal custom in the ch[urch]
 Old Testament giving of the Holy Spirit
 All should give
 1st From a business standp't
 2nd For humanity's sake
 3rd Because God commands
 4th Because of the good it does
 Suggestions
 Give systematically
 Give *all* you can
 Give *cheerfully*
 Do not give for glory
 Give for the good of others
 The day: Sunday
 The scope: everyone
 The amount: as you are blessed
 The nature of: act of worship
 The object:
 The nature: of a *free will*
 A *gift*

Tufts would have preached many times to young people, at Lees-McRae and elsewhere. One sermon for which the notes survive was probably composed with such an audience in mind, but it may also have reflected Tufts's awareness of his own work. Titled "Influence," it took its text from Romans 14:7: "For none of us liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself." The notes read: "everybody has an Influence. Influence is increased a) by position b) by certain gifts. Two kinds: cf. Jno 1:43-46 [the story of Philip's leading Nathaniel to Jesus]. *Direct* and intentional. cf. Jno 21 [Jesus' appearance to his disciples after the resurrection]. Indirect and unintentional. Goes on *after death*."

Another sermon outline gave insight into Tufts's own faith. The text was Psalm 27, which begins, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" Tufts asked rhetorically, "What has sustained us?"

and answered, "The goodness of the Lord. 1) providing for our wants 2) raising up friends 3) in giving us His Word for a lamp 4) In preparing a Home, cf. Jno. 14, Rev. 21:1-4."

After the morning service, on those monthly Sunday afternoons, Tufts would perhaps have made pastoral calls in town before his scheduled evening services in Pineola, Linville, or some other outpost. He early developed a warm and respectful friendship with William R. Savage, who served the Episcopal Mission of St. Mary's from 1902 to 1917. Eleven years Tufts's senior, the bachelor Savage lived at Blowing Rock, and had charge of his church's work in Valle Crucis as well. About 1920 he went to Todd in Ashe County, cared for the mission there, and then was officially retired at Glendale Springs, living in the mission house until his death in 1934.¹⁹ When Tufts died in 1923, the Episcopal priest, now "a veteran in the army of the Master," as he said of himself, sent the widow a tribute to his Christian coworker. He remembered that they first met at "7 o'clock in the evening of Saturday the 27th day of September, 1902, . . . at Miss Pendley's supper table and sat side by side, and we have been going that close to each other ever since!" Savage had preached for Tufts several times in Banner Elk and had "aided him in administering the Lord's Supper" and at least one baptism: the infant daughter the Tufts lost so young. The clergyman wrote, "the everlasting hills of the Lost Provinces so-called [were] stern witnesses of the faithfulness of the beloved pastor who travelled throughout the mountain country ministering to 'the sheep and lambs of the flock,' aiding the needy, lifting up the fallen, ministering to the sick and dying, comforting the afflicted, in fact doing everything that a real shepherd of the sheep would do for the flock under his care."²⁰

As so many did, Savage emphasized in his tribute Tufts's work "than which there can be no greater—the noble work of providing for the mountain boys and girls a good education at small cost, one so thorough in all its branches that it fitted the students not only for higher institutions of learning but as well for the great duties of life." Tufts's most permanent legacy to the mountains was the Lees-McRae Institute, which he built up out of the work of volunteer summer workers who preceded and immediately followed him in Banner Elk: women such as Annie Lucie Morgan, who stayed on in the community to marry one of the local pupils, George Banner; the Rev. L. E. Bostian, who took over Tufts's duties for the winter of 1895-96; and others. He honored Elizabeth McRae of Maxton, North Carolina, another Presbyterian mountain teacher who had taught in nearby Cranberry, but never in Banner Elk, when he used her name for his school in 1900.²¹

But it was another of Tufts's enterprises in Banner Elk which his

congregation at Blowing Rock took most to heart: the children's home he started in 1914. Tufts, as Rumble before him, had early on been concerned for little children whose families had been broken up by the death of one or both parents and whose remaining relatives had neither room nor means to care for them. By early 1914, his school well launched, Tufts resolved to do something for their care.

Tufts often sought outside support, always with permission of presbytery, for his work, first for the school, later for a hospital, and, toward the end of his life, for a full-fledged college (his pleas on behalf of that last cause were not accepted). So after first designating a site on the school property and rounding up some furnishings from his Banner Elk congregation, he sent to the churches in presbytery a folder announcing his purpose to open a "mountain orphanage" that spring. A great deal, he said, was needed, including "two or three good cows and a lot of poultry. . . . Money can also be used." Help came from the First Presbyterian Church of Concord, where Annie Ludlow Cannon and the Grier Bible Class raised \$1000 toward the first buildings. That church and many others later sent additional sums.²² But most importantly for the Blowing Rock church, Tufts had succeeded in interesting a remarkable and generous woman, and a member of his summer congregation, in his work. Annie Cannon had already come to know Tufts in Blowing Rock. She not only continued to support the Grandfather Home, but would later become the largest single benefactor of Rumble Church.²³ Special collections for the work of the Home from the Blowing Rock congregation, which began soon after the session was organized and have continued to the present, have amounted to many times the original cost of the entire enterprise.

Not long before Tufts arrived in the county, a second generation, scions of the church's original founders, had grown to manhood, married, and taken their places in the burgeoning Blowing Rock summer community. Two of these were soon to make major contributions to the church of their fathers, on the state and national levels and at Blowing Rock. William Joseph Martin, Jr. (1868-1943) and Charles Graves Vardell (1860-1956) became brothers-in-law when Martin married Vardell's sister Jennie in 1897. Vardell, it may be recalled, married Rumble's daughter Linda in 1891. Despite the difference in their ages, the men were also classmates, in the class of 1888, at Davidson College.

Vardell had worked for the United States Department of Agriculture and had attended Oberlin College for two years before entering Davidson in 1885. The younger Martin had spent summers in Blowing Rock with his family from the time of his childhood; Vardell first came to the resort community while a student at Davidson, to wait tables at a resort hotel. However well they may have known each other at school, the church at the Rock must have brought them closer together. The Presbyterian summer community revolved around Rumble and the "Old Colonel," Martin's father. Vardell, whose own father, William Gildersleeve Vardell, was a Presbyterian minister in Charleston, South Carolina, would have received a ready welcome in the circle.

After college, both men went on to professional study. Martin taught one year at Presbyterian College in South Carolina, then attended Johns Hopkins University for one year. From there he went to the University of Virginia, his father's alma mater, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and received both the M.D. degree and the Ph.D. in chemistry. He taught at the University until 1896. During the summer of 1895 Dr. Martin "of the University of Va." was "resident physician" at the Fair View House in Blowing Rock, "Mrs. M. J. Brady, Proprietress." Vardell, meanwhile, attended Princeton Theological Seminary and earned the Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1891. He was pastor at the Presbyterian Church in New Bern from 1891 to 1896. Then in 1896 both men entered the field of Presbyterian higher education in North Carolina. When his father died, Martin was invited to take the Colonel's chair as Maxwell B. Chambers Professor of chemistry at Davidson. Here he taught until 1912, when he was elected president of the college. He left in 1929 to head what was then known as the General Assembly's Training School, now the Presbyterian School of Christian Education, in Richmond, until he retired in 1933. Also in 1896, Vardell was called by Fayetteville Presbytery to be president of the newly-formed Red Springs Seminary for Women, soon to be renamed Flora MacDonald College, in Red Springs. He ran the school for almost thirty-five years, retiring in 1930.²⁴

In 1898 and 1899, Vardell and his wife purchased several lots on Chestnut Hill, near the Martins' house in Blowing Rock. Vardell designed and built a summer house for his own family, and a cottage for Dr. Rumble, on the site. The Colonel's property had passed to his heirs in 1896. "Bill Joe," as his family and friends knew him, bought out his sisters' shares of the family's mountain holdings in 1909. Thus by early in the century, Chestnut Hill had turned into a virtual Presbyterian academic enclave during the summers. Vardell's children and grandchildren recall large and lively summer gatherings of family and

friends around the five-leaved dining table or in front of the great rock fireplace in the wood panelled living room at the Vardell house. The college president brothers-in-law ran their schools from the mountains during the summers. Vardell, whose campus was farther from Blowing Rock, frequently dispatched and received couriers from Red Springs, but made a point to spend the entire vacation with his family.²⁵

Both Martin and Vardell were enthusiastic amateur architects. Vardell had not only selected the lumber and helped to build his mountain house; he designed the main building at Flora MacDonald and laid out the school gardens as well. Martin had seen to the building in Davidson of a house for his mother and sisters after the death of his father.²⁶ Now another project began to occupy them during the summer of 1905: a new and larger church for Blowing Rock's Presbyterians. The 1886 chapel had been hit by lightning sometime during the 1890's, a frequent hazard in the mountaintop community, but one not often mentioned by the town's boosters. The building was propped up to compensate for the lightning strike, but must not have been very attractive afterwards; "on a windy Sunday it groaned and creaked and was uncomfortable." The growing summer crowd, besides, had begun to spill out of its doors.

The church they planned was of mountain stone, in a simple, gothic style, with a seating capacity of about 220. One Sunday just before church, they discussed with Tufts the "rough pencil sketch" Martin had prepared. The whole idea seems to have been theirs, not the preacher's, but, builder and promoter that he was, Tufts undoubtedly was quickly and easily persuaded to go along.²⁷

Martin and Vardell had the blessing of Dr. Rumble in the new enterprise. Now well over seventy, Rumble had acquired an assistant pastor at his church in Salisbury and was no longer so active in the church's work. His wife, who "was shared with me for forty-five years," as he said, had "entered into a much needed rest" three years before.²⁸ Dr. Rumble lived to see the project well launched. At his death in early 1906 the dedicatory stone, which later gave the church its name, memorialized his many contributions to the church's founding.

Another involved in starting the building project that summer of 1905 was Edwin M. Williamson, also a summer resident and another Vardell brother-in-law. A textile merchant from Fayetteville, Williamson had married Vardell's sister, Catherine, in 1902; long active in the First Church of Fayetteville, he was a ruling elder and clerk of the session there. He, too, had his summer cottage on Chestnut Hill.²⁹

But also by that summer, another important Presbyterian pastor had become a seasonal regular at the Rock: the Rev. James Isaac

Vance, D.D. (1862-1939). Vance's persuasive preaching helped draw the funds needed for the building from pockets of visiting worshippers over the next several summers. And for a generation thereafter, his frequent appearances in Rumble's pulpit would be a prominent feature of the resort's season. His oratory would also be invoked on Grandfather Home Sunday for nearly twenty years.

"Dr. Vance was a man among a thousand, a preacher among ten thousand. In the mature years of his life he was accounted one of the twenty-five best preachers in the United States."³⁰ What initially attracted Vance to Blowing Rock as a summer haven is not known. He bought land, from Joe B. Clark, Blowing Rock's first mayor, and his wife "Lou," adjoining the Moses Cone property on the northwest side of town, in 1901. By the next year he had completed the summer house to which he and his family returned for the rest of their lives.

At this time Vance was preaching at the North Reformed Church in Newark, New Jersey, where he served from 1900 to 1910. But his roots were in the Appalachian mountains. Born in Arcadia, Tennessee, not far from Bristol and Blountville, Vance could trace his family ancestry to the Scotch-Irish pioneers who founded the Watauga Settlement in the days just after the American Revolution.³¹ Graduating in 1883 from King College in Bristol, Tennessee, Vance entered Union Seminary that fall. He received a master's degree from the college at the same time he finished seminary. His first church was in Wytheville, Virginia, but he did not stay long: his skill in the pulpit must have attracted the attention of larger city churches. He preached successively in Alexandria and Norfolk, Virginia, and Nashville, Tennessee, before his call to the Newark church in 1900. By that date he had already written four of the more than twenty books he published during his life. In 1910 he returned to Nashville and the pulpit he had previously filled at First Church (now called Downtown Church), Nashville, where he spent the remainder of his years.³²

These men—Martin, Vardell, Williamson, Rumble, and Vance—formed the building committee to start work, "Without a dollar, but in faith."³³ "A Sabbath was appointed on which Dr. Vance was to preach and present the proposed action to the congregation." Over the next few days, funds were solicited, not only from Presbyterians, but from "many summer visitors and residents of Blowing Rock of other denominations." Treasurer for the project at first was Gaither W. Hall, who had moved to Blowing Rock from Banner Elk and transferred his membership from Tufts's congregation there in December 1902. When Hall moved to North Wilkesboro in 1907, Martin took over that part of the job as well.

In the early fall of 1905, Martin submitted the plans for the church to Charlotte architect C. C. Hook, “to judge whether the roof structure was so designed as to be safe in high winds and to pass on the general lines of the building.” Hook, who had begun his career as a school builder in Charlotte, was the first professional architect that city had ever had.³⁴ He found the plans in order, but added “one member to the roof timbers” and made “slight changes in the window and door arches.” Hook presumably also prepared the working drawings for the builders’ use.

A curious feature of the building’s design is that the roof timbers were so spaced as to be aligned over the peaks of the gothic windows, rather than over the more substantial, unbroken wall areas. The load of the roof was thus supported by the pillars at the corners of the building, and by outside buttresses, not by the walls, which nevertheless were substantial: three feet thick at the base and eighteen inches thick at the top. The inward-tapering slope of the building’s exterior, though, was pleasing. The church exterior displayed a “firm foundation” (the walls began two feet below present ground level), even as it subtly embraced the worshippers within. The enormous roof expanse was steeply pitched, the better to shed the weight of heavy winter snow. Its shape drew joking references to “St. Rufus” from local Episcopalians or to “the ice house” from other town residents. A widely-distributed photograph of the church in winter, taken about 1960 by Thomas W. Reese, showed the wisdom, even the romance, of Martin’s design. Drifted snow, piled nearly to the roof’s edge, seemed almost to replace the walls as support for the roof’s prominent peak.

At the rear of the building is a semi-detached bell tower of a slightly lower height than the main roof. Exactly when it was built is unclear. It may well have been part of the structure Martin designed. But a Sunday school room was added at the back of the church in 1921 and removed in 1936; the tower may also have been added at that time. Two April 1921 entries by treasurer Will Holshouser in the church records noted, “Paid Freight on Bell, \$14.32,” and “Paid for Bell, \$68.20.” Presumably the bell from the first building had been sold, or damaged in the lightning strike during the 1890’s, and not replaced until 1921.³⁵

No session had yet been formed at the church to keep formal minutes when the building started, so no record of the reactions of the local communicants has been preserved. But, as with the construction of the medieval European cathedrals, the project soon came to involve numerous workmen from all over the community, who left their own

peculiar cultural marks on it. The most locally-famous story concerns the rock used for the church interior. Dr. Martin recalled that he

gave orders that the rock for the arch and the pulpit furniture be carefully selected. When placed on the ground, while approving of the rock, he noticed some stains on some of it. He inquired of the man who hauled it as to the source of the rock and was told that if the truth were told it would not be used. On being pressed he confessed he had taken it from the chimney of an abandoned moonshine still house! This rock is in the arch and in the pulpit, glorifying the God who created these oldest of mountains of which they are a part.

Current member and longtime elder at Rumble Church, Perry Lentz, remembers some of the local details: much of the rock for the church was supplied by his grandfather L. M. Frye from sites above what is now Flat Top Road; he hauled it for the church at \$1.75 for two wagon-loads, twenty-five cents off the going rate, because, as his grandfather explained, he was a member of a Masonic Lodge and the project deserved to get a break in the price. Some of the stone, specifically that used on the north side of the building, came from Frye's own land. As for the still, Lentz in his childhood was shown its exact site: under a poplar tree on a branch, on a piece of the family's property which has long since been acquired for the Blue Ridge Parkway right of way. The story that has come down in his family, however, has it the still was not illegal: his great-grandfather Frye produced white "blockade liquor" with a license.³⁶

Building supervisor for the project was local resident Joe White, Sr., later to become one of the first members of the church session. Hall and Tufts in November 1905 let the contract for the stone walls to George Duncan for \$750, "with any additional rock work to be done at \$3.50 per cubic yard."³⁷

The attractive but extensive building wound up costing some \$2500, according to Martin. This "reasonable cost was due in part to the fact that [White] and most of the workers charged less than their customary wages for their labor on the building." The work lasted seven years. As Martin recalled the timetable, the old building came down at the end of the summer, 1905, and was sold for \$100. Work on the new one started that fall. By spring 1906 the walls had been built and the roof put on. Rough flooring was laid early in the summer of 1906, the pulpit platform framed, and rough boards laid down, so that services could be held for the season. "In order to get the building in shape for use that summer, everyone drove hard to finish the roof and lay the rough floor.

Even Drs. Vardell and Martin turned carpenters and framed the pulpit platform and later helped to lay the rock in the pulpit furniture. Indeed during the summer construction of the building, both Dr. Vardell and Dr. Martin spent most of their time watching, directing and assisting in the construction." By 1908, enough money had been obtained to finish the interior maple flooring. The rock arch over the pulpit went up, and "the grounds were graded and sown in rye" the same year.

Money for the construction was raised, after the first year, by contributions from Sunday to Sunday. According to Dr. Martin, "the congregations were very patient and co-operative with the repeated calls, even when on one occasion Dr. Vance announced, 'Dr. Martin will now make the financial report and take up the *congregation!*'" Work on the new building was virtually complete by 1912, when the ceiling and trusses were cased in oiled chestnut wood. During these years the building could not be used in winter. Father Savage allowed Tufts's little year-round flock use of the Episcopal church, then farther up Main Street than it is now, in the off-seasons. Episcopalian layman W. W. Stringfellow, builder of the Chetola estate, also aided the Presbyterians by designing the pews still used in the sanctuary.

Two memorials to Rumple were included in the new building. On one pillar of the porch, facing the street, was erected a polished stone marker, carved with the words "Rumple Memorial." It was presented to the Blowing Rock congregation after the pastor's death by his Sunday school classes at the Salisbury Church. The stone, which was moved in 1928 to the rebuilt portico, may well have been intended to mark the name of the church; but the change was not made official until 1940.³⁸

In addition, an unusually attractive and ornamented stained glass window, of Tiffany style, was installed in the choir loft sometime during construction, "In loving memory of Rev. Jethro Rumple, D.D." No record indicates who provided it, or which firm supplied it; no doubt members of his family moved to have it done. Its representation of the open Bible, against a backdrop suggesting the everlasting hills, has symbolized for three generations the contribution the church's founder made to the mountain community he loved, and the faith by which he lived. A brilliantly jeweled crown at the apex of the window unmistakably recalled the Scriptural text, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). And the golden pathway shown leading from the Word to the crown depicted the heavenly reward of the believer, the eternal city where the "street was pure gold, as it were transparent glass" (Rev. 21:21). The "Rumple Window" is one of the most beautiful to be seen anywhere in the region.

As the rock church went up, new members came in.³⁹ Most important for the future work of the church, three men and their families: W. L. "Will" Holshouser in July 1911, Edward G. Underdown and Joseph N. White in November 1912, joined the fellowship. On March 23, 1913, these men were elected and installed as ruling elders, thus constituting the first church session. Holshouser was also elected clerk and treasurer of the session, and the church's first lay delegate to Concord Presbytery, which met that fall in Lenoir. According to the Presbyterian system of government then prevailing, an elder's term of service was not limited. Each of these men thus held office at his own and the church's pleasure indefinitely. Holshouser served as elder until his death in March 1942, at age seventy-three. Underdown ended his service at about the same time. White's term was the longest: he was still an elder when he died in February 1952. The extended families of all these men, especially Holshouser's, have provided many faithful members to Rumble Church ever since. One son, Howard P. Holshouser, Sr., is elder emeritus. Another of Will's sons, J. E. "Peck" Holshouser, after three years' service on the session at Rumble, left to become ruling elder at the newly-organized Presbyterian Church in Boone in 1939. His son, James E., Jr., baptized at Rumble in 1935, served as governor of the state from 1961 to 1969. Numerous others, related by marriage, have made the extended Holshouser clan one of the most active throughout the church's history.⁴⁰

One of the first decisions of the new session was to pledge \$150 per year for the pastor's salary, beginning in April 1914. Holshouser's treasurer records show the sum was paid, in monthly installments of \$12.50, beginning on schedule and continuing until 1919, when the sum was raised to \$20 a month, or \$240 annually. By that time, the "high cost of living" had become a national concern and the pay increase must have been justified in those terms. The church had paid a little over \$2 for "2 loads wood" to fuel the stove in the stone church in 1915; by 1919 it cost \$3.50.

Two interesting facts emerge from the early financial records. First, collections at each Sunday service in summer were substantially higher than they were during the winter. In 1917, for example, the collections from January through May averaged less than \$5 per monthly meeting, while for July, August, and early September, each service, held almost weekly, raised about \$22; by year's end, the last months' offerings each brought in about \$2. Given the seasonal nature

of the church's activity, and the comparatively greater affluence of the summer visitors, the pattern is not surprising. Without the summer contributors, the local congregation would have been hard pressed to pay the pastor's salary.

But the surprise in the records is that for more than two years, beginning in 1913 and going on into 1916, Tufts had his Blowing Rock winter congregation devote their monthly contributions almost exclusively to support the Grandfather Home. The sums were not large: \$1 to \$4 per service. Holshouser faithfully gave the preacher, each Monday after his visit, a check for the "Orphans Home" which came to the full amount collected in the previous day's offering plate. Such was the need, and such the concern for Tufts's work, that the little year-round congregation and their pastor must have cooperated in this arrangement. In effect, then, the church depended entirely upon summer receipts to pay the preacher.

During those same years, one collection each summer month was also designated for the Home, although none was exceptionally large. It was not until 1918 that Dr. Vardell, visiting Tufts in Banner Elk and seeing for himself the great need, returned to the summer congregation to make a plea for a special offering on the Home's behalf. Vardell told his listeners that two weeks hence he would take up the special offering and he expected \$1000 from them that Sunday; scoffers were silenced when "\$850 was counted on the table and the balance of \$150 came later."⁴¹ From that summer to the present, Rumble Church has continued giving to Grandfather Home; not only have far larger sums been raised from these annual appeals, but the budget of the church for its regular program has also been more conventionally covered. Many more years would go by before the church became fully self-supporting; but its sense of sacrifice for the needs of others had been early aroused.

By the time of World War I, mission work had captured the imagination of the entire denomination—indeed, of most of Protestant Christianity. Domestic missions of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., were benefitting both from a restructuring of support and organization, and from the renewed zeal with which pastoral and lay leaders had turned to the cause of evangelizing the world with the gospel.

In 1893 the General Assembly adopted a new plan for home missions which, while continuing to encourage presbyterial and synodical efforts, also provided for two Churchwide offerings annually to support the Assembly's own such work. Weaker, poorer, and more remote churches and schools now got more direct funding. Areas in Appalachia were almost immediate beneficiaries. In 1896 Asheville Presbytery was created, covering eleven North Carolina counties west of the Blue Ridge hitherto part of Mecklenburg Presbytery. "By 1903 there were five mission schools within its bounds. In this same year, the General Assembly's [executive] committee [on home missions] began its work in the mountains. Through the gift of a Christian philanthropist, Nacoochee Institute in north Georgia was opened; the capacity of Lees-McRae Institute in Concord Presbytery was doubled; financial assistance was given to the five schools in Asheville Presbytery."

Laymen's organizations such as the Society of Soul Winners, founded in 1897 by the well known Kentucky Presbyterian doctor turned preacher E. O. Guerrant, crossed denominational lines to gain support for work among the mountain people.⁴² Work of a more secular nature, associated with the Peabody Fund, the Grange, the Conference for Education in the South, and other such philanthropic agencies, helped to turn the nation's eyes to the southeastern highlands. Even the emergence of good roads movements in North Carolina and elsewhere was having a similar beneficial effect.⁴³

A prominent lay leader in such movements locally, and one of the most noteworthy, was Dr. W. J. Martin's sister, Mary Turpin Martin Sloop. She also was an M.D., a 1906 graduate of the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania. At thirteen she had confided to Dr. Rumble that she wanted to be a medical missionary, thinking of the foreign field. The practical pastor, who knew her parents well, wondered what her mother's reaction would be—not to her vocation of missionary but to her intent to study medicine. "I believe it'd kill her," she told him.

But she persisted in her ambition. To please her parents she attended Statesville Female College (she hated the school's name) but also took courses at Davidson, where she met her future husband, Eustace Sloop. Then for several years after the Colonel's death, she had to help care for her aging mother. By the time she was twenty-nine, in 1902, with one year of study behind her at the North Carolina Medical College in Davidson, where she was denied entrance into an anatomy class, she learned that the denomination thought her already too old, and physically frail, to handle the rigors of the foreign mission field. Almost fifty years after, both rejections still rankled. She determined to finish her medical studies, and as her relationship with Sloop gradu-

ally deepened, made with him the “momentous decision” to “settle down in the North Carolina mountains” after they were married. “If we could not be foreign missionaries, we could serve at home.”⁴⁴

Sloop, or “Doctor,” as Mary Martin called him, had meanwhile completed his degree at the North Carolina Medical College and had taken postgraduate study at Jefferson College, Pennsylvania. Returning to North Carolina, he had begun his practice at the tiny community of Plumtree, in what was then Mitchell County. Here the Rev. Joseph P. Hall, Tufts’s brother-in-law, had already begun a school not unlike Tufts’s own, but for boys; the schools would later merge at Banner Elk after a devastating fire destroyed the Plumtree dormitory in January 1927. The Sloops believed the place the ideal mission field for them.

But first came the wedding. On July 2, 1908, they were married at Blowing Rock, in the Presbyterian church her father had helped to found and her brother had helped to build. They may well have been the first couple to take the marriage vows in the almost-completed stone sanctuary. Dr. A. T. Graham of the Davidson College Presbyterian Church, the Martins’ pastor and friend, came up to officiate. The ceremony was simple: the couple was, after all, by the standards of the day, already middle-aged. The bride wore a plain white linen suit, the groom a black one which she later cut down for their son to wear. The “children of Blowing Rock” had decorated the stone church with “mountain flowers and evergreens, simply but most effectively, and they had been so interested in doing it.”⁴⁵

The story of the Sloops’ work at Plumtree, and at Crossnore, where they moved a few years later, there to practice medicine and found the Crossnore School, has been well told in the 1953 book, *Miracle in the Hills*. M. M. Sloop was the nation’s Mother of the Year in 1951. Dr. W. J. Martin actively supported the mountain work of his sister and brother-in-law in numerous ways, not the least of which was financial. One of the Sloops’ first rescue operations was to save a twelve year-old girl from a premature marriage match to “a drunkard and a moon-shiner” by sending her off to Lees-McRae with money and clothing supplied from Davidson friends and relations.⁴⁶

More personally, the professor helped them in 1909 when he bought out his sisters’ shares of the family property in Blowing Rock. The Sloops seem to have used this money to acquire a stake in the work Hall was doing at Plumtree, but for some reason, perhaps because of differences between Hall and the Sloops, the arrangement did not work out. In 1912 presbytery ordered Hall “to refund out of the funds of the Plumtree school, to Dr. E. H. Sloop, the money invested by him in the Plumtree property at the earliest possible date; and in view of

Dr. Sloop's urgent need of these funds, we suggest that a negotiable note be given him in case the cash is not soon available."

Martin at that time lent the Sloops an additional sum to get started at Crossnore.⁴⁷ There the Sloops were careful to keep their work non-sectarian, no doubt to enhance its acceptance by the local people they were trying to help. Mary Martin Sloop wrote about 1928, "The family is Presbyterian and democratic, and when they came to Crossnore they found that there were but few Presbyterians, and that democrats were still more infrequent." Sloop would later find many sources of private support for her work, including the Daughters of the American Revolution, in which organization she was entitled to membership through her mother's family.⁴⁸

In addition to the direct support he provided his sister's work, Martin promoted many of the church's larger missionary causes during his active years. He was elected Moderator of the General Assembly in 1914, a highly unusual honor for a layman in that era.⁴⁹ In that capacity, and from his own interest, he participated in the February 1915 meetings of the Laymen's Missionary Movement to speak on "Our Increased Responsibility" in "carrying out the great commission of our common Lord and Master." Held in two locations, Charlotte, North Carolina and Dallas, Texas, these meetings drew a total of 4,370 people. In attendance at the Charlotte meetings were, among many others, the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. C. G. Vardell of Red Springs, and elder Will Holshouser from Blowing Rock.

The "Great War" then raging in Europe, although not yet involving the United States, was heavy on Martin's mind, as it was for many of the other speakers at that conference. He pointed out that the war had started not "in heathendom but in the center of so-called Christian Europe." It had come about, not as a failure of Christianity, but as "the failure of people who, while professing Christianity, have failed to live as Christ taught." Martin said, "Only when we literally obey Christ's commands will we have peace. . . . Throughout Christendom Christ's followers have been busy, but not about their Father's business. In the temple of life we have been money changers, and Christ is now scourging us with war and tumult, with unrest and unhappiness, and He will scourge us again and again until He brings us to a faithful obedience to His command." He considered the opportunities for American mission efforts overseas greatly enhanced because of the pullback of European-sponsored missionaries. Americans would have to emulate the sacrificial spirit of Christ's own service to others. "What we need is more men, more money, more faith, more prayers, more unselfishness, more sacrifice, more Christ-likeness," he concluded.⁵⁰

When within another two years the United States did enter the World War, a different kind of sacrifice was demanded of Americans. Yet the church also found other opportunities for ministry. One of Blowing Rock's regular summer pastors, Dr. James I. Vance, had done what he could, following the lead of Presbyterian President Woodrow Wilson, to remain neutral and work for peace before American entry into the conflict; thereafter he was active in numerous war-related efforts in Nashville and throughout the Church. Vance was equally as interested in missions as his friend Martin; he served thirty-two years on the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions of the denomination, 1895-1901 and 1911-1937. During the war he visited the front several times, and spent time with American soldiers in the immediate post-Armistice period. On his return he published a book, *Silver on the Iron Cross*, a collection of his observations in Europe and his sermons to the troops. In 1918, Vance was also elected Moderator of the General Assembly. By a curious coincidence, then, Martin held that post at the outbreak, Vance at the end, of World War I.

During the war years, as yet another part of its mission thrust, the Presbyterian Church, U. S., restructured its synod and presbytery boundaries, the better to highlight and support its work in the Appalachian mountains. A primary proponent of the reorganization was the Rev. R. F. Campbell, D.D., of Asheville. His work had drawn General Assembly support since 1903. To him, the creation of Asheville Presbytery in 1896, which had then been evangelized with synod support, was a model for the larger church to follow: by setting up the new synod as a mission field, work there could draw support from the entire General Assembly. At the 1913 meeting of North Carolina Synod at Greensboro, he urged all synods concerned with mountain home mission work to overture the General Assembly in the interest of erecting a "Synod of Appalachia." Only the Synod of Tennessee at first responded favorably to the idea; "strongest opposition was encountered in the Synods of North Carolina and Kentucky," both of which by now had long years of experience at synodical missions. Virginia, too, at first objected; but Dr. Campbell, and the Rev. C. C. Carson of Bristol, carried the case around the region and in 1915 the synods gave their approval. In May the General Assembly approved the new boundaries, which encompassed 67 counties in five states.⁵¹

Edgar Tufts was an early and enthusiastic supporter of the new arrangements. As much as anyone in the church, he knew the isolation of the region and the difficulty of raising funds for his work. So, although other, more settled churches in Concord Presbytery at first opposed the plan, Tufts pressed for including the mountain counties of

Concord within the new Synod's boundaries. As ordered in 1915, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, and Yancey Counties were taken from the Presbytery of Concord and became part of the historic, twelve-county Presbytery of Holston, formerly in the Synod of Tennessee. The arrangement continued until 1969, when the churches in Watauga County rejoined Concord Presbytery.⁵²

Entry into Holston Presbytery and the Synod of Appalachia turned out to be important for Rumble church. For although the move undoubtedly did something to loosen its traditional ties to the rest of the state's Presbyterians, it was drawn more closely into the kind of mission work for which the synod had been created: extending education and planting other new churches. It also brought increased exposure and funding for its pastor's enterprises in nearby Banner Elk: Tufts not only got continued support from Concord, but from Holston Presbytery and from the General Assembly as well. It later helped the small congregation pay the salaries of ministers who succeeded Tufts, as the church was as yet unable to cover its own costs and depended on presbytery supplements. Finally, through its place as a mission work of Holston Presbytery, the church first formed its relationship with a man who not long after came to be superintendent of presbytery's home missions and would one day become Rumble's own beloved pastor, Walter King Keys.

Never physically strong, the dedicated Edgar Tufts had risked his health in his work ever since he had arrived at his mountain post in a snowstorm in 1895. On his way home to Banner Elk after preaching his December sermon at Blowing Rock in 1922, yet another exposure to the bitter wind and cold brought on a bout of pneumonia. His weakened lungs gave out on January 6, 1923.⁵³

Tributes to Tufts and to his work appeared widely in the religious and secular press at his death. The *Lenoir News-Topic* of February 8, 1923 reprinted several of them, including two which appeared in the *Presbyterian Standard*, written by James I. Vance and Mary Martin Sloop.⁵⁴ Vance's was the more elegantly phrased: "The people of the mountains are in mourning. They have lost their best friend. Edgar Tufts has gone home." Vance had received the news by telegram at his church office in Nashville, "and as the yellow paper fell from my hands to the floor, my heart cried,

"Oh, God, how can they get on up there in the mountains without him?" . . . For I know how they love him, how absolutely they trust him. For 25 years he has been their sky-pilot, pointing and preaching and leading the way to the country lying out there beyond their own fair, far skyline, and he has always led them straight. . . . Edgar Tufts, slight of figure, weighing little more than a hundred pounds, never of robust health, twice laid aside from his work by tuberculosis, but sent back to his work apparently cured, so diffident and modest and retiring that he would escape notice when men of bigger bodies but smaller souls were on the stage, . . . he was the biggest little man it has ever been my privilege to know. . . . The great peaks could not forget Edgar Tufts. . . . The winds as they sing through the great timbers will be chanting their "Te Deum" for a man who "was an hiding place from the winds and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

Mary Martin Sloop's tribute was more rooted in the reality of the place and time in which Tufts worked. She and Tufts had endured similar severe weather and hardships but had persevered out of similar motives. She wrote a description of the service held for Tufts at the church he served in Banner Elk:

Bitter weather and terrible roads deterred the great crowds that came some 50 miles to that beautiful rock church—"Mr. Tufts's Church"—to show what his life had meant to them. 'Twas a typical afternoon. As they bore the casket from the home to the church, the sleet and mud reminded us of the many years of faithful service in all sorts of weather, when this servant of God had failed not once to meet his speaking appointments, often in the furthestest cove of the bleakest mountainside. During the funeral service, the flood of sunlight that poured through the beautiful windows of the church, typified God's rich blessing of Mr. Tufts's tireless efforts. As the sun faded, the flood of the electric lights bore witness of his vision of what might be accomplished in the mountains—of the mountains—and for the mountains. And at the grave the complete lining of green galax and silver pine, which loving hands had so skilfully prepared, proved how his love of the beautiful had met a response in their hearts. We left the grave praising God for the endless influence of such a life—a life whose secret was unselfish faith; a death whose keynote was victory. And we thanked God for the son and daughters who can go on with his work.

Much of the little preacher's work would indeed be carried on into the next generation by his son, Edgar Hall Tufts, who had just graduated from Davidson, and who took over the school, the orphanage, and the

hospital work. The younger Tufts soon combined the Banner Elk enterprises his father had begun into the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association, which still functions. The pastoral responsibilities Tufts had laid down, however, required an ordained minister; Blowing Rock and all Tufts's churches awaited a new leader for the flock.

Notes for Chapter Two

1. In 1889 a Synod evangelist was appointed, the Rev. William D. Morton, to try to "meet the 'destitutions' that existed in all of the presbyteries." Morton served until 1893; his work seems to have had little to do with mountain communities. His successor, the Rev. John M. Rose, worked out of Morganton for about eighteen months in more remote areas. Although there is no record of it, he may well have preached in Watauga. McGeachy, *Confronted*, pp. 400, 402, 425.
2. McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 406. The Elk Park church did not survive long; Margaret Tufts Neal does not remember her father ever preaching there. A much more substantial wave of church planting in Mitchell and Avery counties came after the turn of the century, as part of the work of the Rev. James P. Hall, of whom more is said below.
3. Synod of North Carolina, Records of 78th annual session, Durham, 1891, p. 535. Rumble was on both the synod and the presbytery committees concerned with the topic of "The Church and Christian Education" in 1891, although he resigned from the synod committee that same year. Both these groups, according to McGeachy, adopted resolutions of support for Pell's educational efforts in the mountains (see below).
4. McGeachy, *Confronted*, pp. 414-415, 420-423. "Skyland Institute, 1897 [sic: 1887]-1912," and "Miss Emily Prudden Writes Autobiography," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, pp. 74-77. Pell's interest in female education was clearly keen. He later served thirty years as president of Converse College, in Spartanburg, S. C., retiring in 1932: Eleanor R. Millard, comp., *A General Catalog of Trustees, Officers, Professors, and Students of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia* (n.p., n.d. [Richmond, VA: 1977?]), hereinafter cited as *Union Seminary, General Catalog*.
5. Hugh Talmadge Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome, *The History of a Southern State: North Carolina*, 3rd ed. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 537, 590, and *passim*.
6. Hope Summerell Chamberlain, brought up in Rumble's church in Salisbury, recalled that in those days "a Presbyterian child must learn the Shorter Catechism. That was the law in our house. I was expected to learn it thoroughly—by question and answer—by pages—by wholes, without one word or one comma misplaced. I was not expected to understand it. It was considered a deposit laid up for the future in the bank vault of my mind. If ever I changed my early beliefs, as everyone is liable to do, it would furnish a comprehensive statement from which honestly to dissent, not a fog bank to fight against, or the ghost of an ancient authority to be exorcised." *This Was Home*, p. 178.
7. McGeachy, *Confronted*, pp. 420-423. See also Thompson, *Presbyterians*, II, 341-352, for debate in the denomination over public *vs.* parochial education during the 1870's and 1880's. The classic study on the general subject is Charles W. Dabney, *Universal Education in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936). Thompson notes, III, 164, that Southern Presbyterians were long divided over whether to support state-controlled schools,

but the majority by the turn of the century had come to back the public school movement; thus the denomination participated fully in the “long-awaited renaissance of Southern [public] education” after 1900. The church had rarely ever in the last part of the nineteenth century explicitly combined teaching and preaching functions for its pastorate, except at the college level; many of Davidson College’s faculty, for example, were ordained ministers but did not minister to a congregation; pastors at churches were not expected to teach.

8. McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 432. If Munroe was temporarily discouraged, he did not let it affect his assignment. His reports over the next several years showed growing success at church planting. Munroe held his post until ill health forced him out in 1917, at age seventy-three. He died at Davidson in 1919.

9. Letter to “Miss Bessie” (Mary Elizabeth Hall), May 13, 1895, quoted in Margaret Tufts Neal, *And Set Aglow A Sacred Flame; History of the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association 1895–1942* (Banner Elk: Puddingstone Press, Lees-McRae College, 1983), pp. 7–8. Hereinafter cited as Neal, *Sacred Flame*. I am grateful to Margaret Tufts Neal for several interviews during 1986 and 1987.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 8. The other seminary field worker in the mountains that summer was licentiate Edward Douglas Brown. The Rev. Brown later was stated clerk and held several charges in Concord Presbytery: Concord and Clio churches in Iredell County, 1907–1916; Thyatira and Back Creek, 1916–1927; Fifth Creek, Third Creek, and Elmwood, 1927–1940. Brown was briefly Munroe’s successor as chairman of the home missions committee in 1917. He died in 1946. McGeachy, *Confronted*, pp. 482, 484, 567.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 3.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 13, 18–19; McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 443.

14. Rev. W. W. Moore, “A Constructive Christian Worker,” *The Pinnacles*, Memorial Issue, Vol. VII, No. 8 (March 1923), pp. 1, 6.

15. Conversation with M. T. Neal, summer 1986. Tufts had also spent somewhat less than a year in the Presbytery of Savannah, Georgia, from the fall of 1901 to sometime in 1902. This interlude is reported on somewhat contradictorily in Synod and presbytery records. Mrs. Neal believes he went to his native state at the urging of some relatives, but “always his heart was with the little white church in the mountains and the school he had started.” *Sacred Flame*, p. 31. He returned to his work in Banner Elk either in June (Synod of North Carolina, Records, 1902, p. 635) or October (McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 447).

16. Oral Interview with Helen Weedon Deaton, summer 1986. The “Fairview Plat,” laid out by J. M. Howell in August of that year, was the second plat ever accepted by the Register of Deeds in Watauga County. Watauga County Court House, Register of Deeds Office.

17. WOC History, prepared by Mrs. H. F. Ingle, 1937, at Historical Foundation, Montreat. Laura Clappitt Holshouser, a Hickory native, married Will Holshouser in 1896. She died in 1962 at age 87: press clipping, RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I.

18. Oral interview with Hattie Brown, July 1987. "Miss Hattie" completed her education at Claremont College, now defunct, in Hickory. After her marriage in 1916, in Mortimer, N.C., "the town that was washed away" in the flood of that year, she and her husband lived in Nashville, where she knew the Rev. James I. Vance, although they did not attend his church. For years after her return to Blowing Rock in 1942, she headed the music department at the Sloops' school in Crossnore, and also taught at the old Blowing Rock High School. She played the piano for the combined Sunday school opening service for many years. "Miss Hattie" has said that Rumble Memorial church has been one of the major vehicles of her Christian life. The sister, Rose McDade, taught Sunday school, and played the piano and the organ at Rumble for several years during the 1920's.

19. James B. Sill, *Historical Sketches of Churches in the Diocese of Western North Carolina Episcopal Church* (Asheville: Publishing Office, Church of the Redeemer, 1953), pp. 58-60.

20. Letter, W. L. Savage to Mrs. Edgar Tufts, March 22, 1923, kindly provided by Margaret Tufts Neal to the author.

21. Neal, *Sacred Flame*, pp. 18, 28-30.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 64-66. Neal's account is most likely authoritative; other reminiscences, including Vardell's in the "1936 History," trace the origins of Tufts's sheltering ministry to 1912.

23. The Cannons' gifts to Rumble Church are discussed more fully in the next chapter. But it should be mentioned here that their support for the Grandfather Home continued until their deaths. Among the structures for which their contributions were largely responsible were a cottage for little boys in the 1920's, and an administrative unit completed in 1941, just before the death of the younger Tufts. Neal, *Sacred Flame*, pp. 72-74, 145.

24. Special Staff of Writers, *North Carolina, Rebuilding an Ancient Commonwealth, North Carolina Biography*, 4 vols. (Chicago and New York: American Historical Society, 1928), IV, 220-221; hereinafter cited as *North Carolina Biography. Ministerial Directory*, 1950 edition, p. 697; Davidson, "A Collection of Letters"; *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, old advertisement, p. 10.

25. Watauga County Court House, Register of Deeds Office. Martin and Vardell were joint executors of Rumble's estate when he died in 1906. His property at that time passed in shares to his daughter, Linda Lee Vardell, and his grandson, James Malcolmson Rumble. She exchanged her share of the property in Blowing Rock for a share of her nephew's inheritance in Salisbury, so J. M. Rumble became sole owner of the land on Main Street.

26. Information from Linda McNett Yarnell of Laurinburg, N.C., Vardell's granddaughter. Early photographs of the school show a substantial brick

building similar in design to "Old Chambers" at Davidson, though smaller, and crowned with a dome instead of a columned turret. Symmetrical wings, each three stories high, extended from the taller, pillared central structure. As for the grounds, the flat, piney fields on which the campus was built had badly needed beautification. Vardell drew on his brother's knowledge and interest as a landscape architect in Charleston to improve the campus appearance, bringing in azaleas and other shrubs. For Martin's project, see Davidson, "A Collection of Papers," p. 2. The house is on Concord Road across from the campus; it is not known how much Martin had to do with its design, however.

27. Martin, "1936 History," p. 4.

28. Letter, J. Rumble to Jno. Allen Brown of Salisbury, July 16, 1902; original in records of First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury, copy in author's possession.

29. Obituary of E. M. Williamson, July 26, 1934, reprinted 1971 in *The Blowing Rocket*, clipping provided by Linda Yarnell. According to Mrs. Yarnell, the Williamson house on Chestnut Hill is the only one on the old Vardell compound which still has a view of Grandfather Mountain. Dr. Vardell had advised his brother-in-law to climb a tree to see what the view would be from the intended site of his house, which he did, and so picked the perfect orientation for it. Williamson's children maintained ties to the property until recent years. Mrs. Yarnell also said that James Malcolmson Rumble, the preacher's grandson, was raised by the Vardells. Close in age to Vardell's oldest boy, Charles junior, he felt more attached to his uncle's family than to his stepfather, Dr. Martin.

30. First Presbyterian Church of Nashville, "JAMES ISAAC VANCE," (3-pp. typed MSS., n.d), p. 1. Copy at Historical Foundation. Several sources refer to Vance's selection as one of the nation's best preachers, by the religious periodical *The Christian Century*, about 1925.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 2. Vance registered the property in the name of his wife, Mamie Currell Vance. They purchased an additional two acres in 1905 when the Clarks rerouted a road connecting the land to the "Caldwell and Watauga Turnpike." Watauga County Courthouse, Register of Deeds Office.

32. A brother, Joseph Anderson Vance, two years younger, also became a Presbyterian minister, following in James's footsteps to King College and Union Seminary. Joseph, too served mostly urban pastorates: in Louisville, Baltimore, Chicago, and Detroit (the latter two in the USA Church). Like his brother, he was a much-published author. Each was moderator of his denomination's General Assembly, James of the PCUS in 1918, Joseph of the PCUSA in 1935. *Ministerial Directory*, 1942 edition, pp. 729-730.

33. "1936 History," 5-pp. section, "History of the Building of the Rock Church." Original typescript in RMPC records, signed by William J. Martin. The story of the building of the rock church took up more than half the account of the church's history prepared by Martin and Vardell in 1936. Martin meticulously wrote that part of the story, looking back over thirty years; his is apparently the only first-hand account which has survived. Because the 1936 sketch has been so often reproduced and distributed locally, his narrative

has entered the community lore. But it still leaves several questions unanswered: Why such a large structure? Why was no local session established before the work started? What became of the old building? Where did all the stone come from? What ever became of the plans? Since these are questions which would be of particular concern to local, not summer people, it becomes even more apparent that the entire project was conceived by and for visitors, not the permanent residents. The author has searched Dr. Martin's papers at Davidson College for some of this information, without result.

34. Jack Claiborne, *The Charlotte Observer, Its Time and Place, 1869-1986* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), pp. 94-95.

35. RMPC session records, old book, p. 115. According to Neal, *Sacred Flame*, p. 91, Tufts was informed on his death bed in January 1923 that the Banner Elk church had just installed a bell in its tower. It is not inconceivable that Holshouser had ordered that bell on behalf of the Banner Elk congregation.

36. Oral interview with Perry and Shirley Lentz, December 1986. But according to historian Dr. Carl Ross of Appalachian State University, the term "blockade liquor" referred to illegal whiskey. How the term originated is unknown.

37. "1936 History," pp. 5-7. Duncan appears on the 1900 census: as of that date he was twenty-four years old, with a wife and two small children, and listed his occupation as shoemaker.

38. Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring 1940 meeting, p. 22.

39. In the summer of 1906, Munroe toured the mountains three times on behalf of the Home Missions Committee and reported "progress of an encouraging character" everywhere except at Cove Creek and Blowing Rock, where there had been "great numbers of removals of members to other sections and places." He recommended the Cove Creek congregation be dissolved and its five members assigned either to Blowing Rock or Banner Elk, with Tufts to get possession of the building at Cove Creek "to be used in any part of his work most needed at Banner Elk." None of the five seems to have joined RMPC at that time. Indeed, from April 1906 to April 1909, no new members joined. When the Rev. and Mrs. John Ingle joined RMPC in November 1912, the jam seems to have broken. Accessions, some from the Reformed church, picked up; but many of those added before 1920 were by transfer from other Presbyterian churches off the mountain, including in April 1909 Mrs. Dan Klutz (Miss Cordelia Williams) from the Davidson church.

40. RMPC session records; Ross, *1900 Census*. Presbytery in that era held two regular sessions per year. Each church ordinarily sent its pastor and its clerk of session, or another session member nominated at a prior session meeting. A review of presbytery records shows Rumble's session was rarely represented all through the 1910's and 1920's, although Tufts attended relatively more frequently, often in the company of an elder from his Banner Elk congregation. Local business obligations, as well as difficult travel conditions, probably precluded Rumble's elders from going very often.

41. "1936 History," "The Church and Grandfather Orphanage," p. 7.

42. Thompson, *Presbyterians*, II, 30-32, 100-103. McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 444. The work of the Society of Soul Winners, primarily educational, was turned over to the General Assembly in 1911: Thompson, *Presbyterians*, p. 104.

43. Elizabeth R. Hooker, *Religion in the Highlands. Native Churches and Missionary Enterprises in the Southern Appalachian Area* (New York: The Home Missions Council, 1933), pp. 204-206; George Brown Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), pp. 254-262. Both Martin and the Sloops were active in the good roads movement; Martin and all Davidson College celebrated when what is now state highway 115, "the Statesville highway," was completed from Charlotte to Davidson about 1916: photograph, Davidson College Archives. M. M. Sloop made several trips to Raleigh during the early 1920's on behalf of road improvements for Avery County; she was especially concerned that local farmers have access to more distant markets for their cash crops: Sloop, *Miracle in the Hills*, pp. 124-129.

44. Sloop, *Miracle in the Hills*, pp. 13-20.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22. According to McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 473, Graham had left the Davidson pastorate in September 1907 to take a charge in Lexington Presbytery.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 68-74.

47. *Minutes of Concord Presbytery*, Spring 1912 meeting, p. 98. Martin told Tufts in 1912 that because he had had to lend the Sloops additional funds in order for them to build at Crossnore, his own "benevolent fund" was fully committed and he could not respond to Tufts's plea for help in getting his electric power dam started at Banner Elk: Letter, Martin to Tufts, June 11, 1912, W. J. Martin papers, Davidson College Archives. At the same presbytery meeting at which Hall was ordered to pay the Sloops back, a call to Hall for his pastoral services from Plumtree and Powder Mill churches in Mitchell county was "stricken from the docket," perhaps indicating that Hall was under something of a cloud with presbytery for the incident, although he was apparently never censured. He continued to be listed as "evangelist," residing in Plumtree, in presbytery records until 1925. After a brief service as stated supply pastor at Hughes church in 1925, he was listed as "without charge" in Holston Presbytery until 1942. His status from then until his death at Plumtree in 1953, at age eighty, was given as "infirm." *Ministerial Directory*, 1956 edition.

48. *North Carolina Biography*, IV, 601-603. Sloop, *Miracle in the Hills*, *passim*.

49. Martin was only the second layman ever chosen as moderator of the General Assembly. He belonged to several PCUS permanent committees over the years: Permanent Committee on the Sabbath, 1908-1914; on Systematic Beneficence, 1911-1913; on Education, 1915-1918, 1920-1931; on Stewardship, 1922; and on Men's Work, 1922-1927. My thanks to Bill Bynum at the Historical Foundation for searching out this information from the General Assembly records.

50. Presbyterian Church in the U.S., *Facing the Situation: Addresses delivered at the Fourth General Convention of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, Presbyterian Church in the U. S., Held in Charlotte, N.C., Feb. 16-18, 1915, [and] Dallas, Texas Feb. 23-25, 1915* (Athens, Ga: Laymens' Missionary Movement [PCUS], 1915) pp. 119-126.

51. Craig, Rev. Edward Marshall, comp. and ed., *Highways and Byways of Appalachia; A Study of the Work of the Synod of Appalachia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States* (Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, 1927), pp. 10-12, and fold-out map attached to back flyleaf. Hereinafter cited as Craig, *Highways*. See also Thompson, *Presbyterians*, III, 104-109.

52. The Lenoir Church strenuously opposed the creation of the new Synod. Its session overtured Concord Presbytery in the fall of 1915 to stop Tufts's attempt to add Caldwell, Burke, and McDowell Counties, too, to the new Synod. Tufts's motives are understandable, but, as the church pointed out, the "rail-road communication [in these counties] is altogether East and South of the Blue Ridge." Lenoir Presbyterian Church, Session minutes, September 2, 1915, p. 136.

53. Neal, *Sacred Flame*, pp. 90-92. In December 1913, Munroe wrote Martin that he had visited Tufts at Cragmont Sanatorium in Asheville where, he reported, Tufts was "very cheerful in spirit and . . . looking remarkably well." His doctor had told him "that in 4 or 6 months he will be entirely restored. His malady according to Dr. [W. C.] Tate and Drs. Brooks and Archer is an acute attack of tuberculosis." Tufts's condition at that time was indeed serious; before he had entered the sanatorium "he got the elders of B. E. church to gather around his bed & they agreed to pay \$300 & and [provide a] manse for Rev. L. C. Vass," who had assisted Tufts in Banner Elk the previous summer. With Tufts's approval, Munroe had begun making plans for Vass to take over Tufts's work. Vass, wrote Munroe, "can be secured for \$700" a year, with Blowing Rock paying \$100 of his salary. Tufts apparently rallied from this illness, however, and the arrangement was not needed. Letter, Munroe to Martin, December 20, 1913, in Martin Papers, Davidson College Archives. Tufts continued to draw his \$12.50 a month salary from the Blowing Rock Church during this time, but Savage may have preached at least once for him in the winter of 1913-14. Savage made a \$10 contribution to Tufts's salary in April 1914, as did several others, including Mrs. E. R. Stewart and R. A. Dunn. Presumably the church was taking a special collection to help Tufts cover his medical expenses. By April, Tufts was present to preside at a session meeting, the first held since October 1913 at RMPC: Session Records, 1913-14.

54. *Lenoir News-Topic*, February 8, 1923, p. 6, clipping preserved at RMPC. Also included in the *News Topic* article were columns reprinted from the *Wilmington Star* and the *Charlotte Observer*.

From Mission to Mainstream, 1923–1940

IN THE SAME YEAR Edgar Tufts died, Blowing Rock suffered another loss: a disastrous fire which burned half the business district of the town – and led to the establishment of the town's first volunteer fire department soon after. Town residents that autumn of 1923, after trying to stop the blaze's progress with bucket brigades and pails of salt, watched the fire burn itself out against the firebreak of Sunset Drive just before it reached church member Luntz Holshouser's grocery store. Ironically, the best vantage point from which to watch the fire was the porch of the old Watauga Hotel across Main Street, a building which three years later itself went up in smoke. The Episcopal reading room, the post office, and several business structures had been destroyed.

But as the *Watauga Democrat* predicted, "The city of Blowing Rock may be expected to rise from the ashes phoenix-like within a short while." The next year, the "biggest building year" in its history, "six hotels or boarding houses, twenty-six new houses, five businesses, and as many restorations" were undertaken. Some six hundred carpenters were kept busy during this "building epidemic."¹ Already the town was profiting from the post-World War I boom in tourism: the *Charlotte Observer* in 1920 wrote of the "magnificent public highways" which brought Blowing Rock and Linville in "easy reach of Charlotte," especially the much-improved Lenoir Turnpike to Blowing Rock, and noted the "great influx of tourists to the Carolina mountains who formerly sought out the beauties of the Rockies and other places in this and other countries."² The Yonahlossee Turnpike between Blowing Rock and Linville, completed as early as 1891, was improved for motor traffic in the 1910's; both these toll roads were taken over by the state and operated as free roads after 1921.³ That year Dr. Martin boasted in

a letter to his son that the trip from Blowing Rock to Davidson, via Lenoir, Hickory, and Mooresville, took him only four and a half hours by car (today one can drive the distance in about half that time).⁴

Few local residents joined the growing numbers of the nation's drivers at first. Rumble elder Will Holshouser reportedly bought the first automobile in the community in April 1913, a motor truck which he used in his dry goods business.⁵ But already summer tourists had been driving to the mountains: that same year some four hundred ten automobiles were reported to have visited the village. Many would have been chauffeur-driven.⁶

Also with the end of World War I came a new interest in leisure activities. One new national sports craze of the 1920's was golf, soon to be denounced from many a church pulpit for keeping Christians on the links instead of in the pews on Sundays. Blowing Rock visitors, as at resorts elsewhere in the country, were no longer content to sit on hotel porches and rock, or merely walk in the woods for exercise. In 1920 the Blowing Rock Development Company, a group of local and summer residents, voted to put fifteen thousand dollars toward a golf course for Blowing Rock. "Additional funds will be spent upon other amusements and attractions, and before another season is on Blowing Rock will be provided with the various sports and amusements which have contributed to the success of other resorts," the *Observer* reported in 1920.⁷ The year 1923 also saw the beginning of the Blowing Rock Horse Show, at first a rather casual affair of the summer people, but soon to become a major social event of the season.⁸

As the town became more accessible and active, and as new buildings replaced the destruction along Main Street, the home building boom, which has never really ended in the resort community, began. Houses in the neighborhood of Mayview Park came to typify the newer summer residences. Developed during the 1920's by Walter Alexander of Charlotte shortly after starting construction of his Mayview Manor Hotel, Mayview's winding, graveled streets opened up building lots carefully selected for their views of the John's River gorge. Compared to more recent town development, Mayview Park, and a bit later Laurel Park, grew rather slowly. But their designs seemed suited to the area, and adapted to the automobile. Large, rambling "cottages," usually furnished with servants' quarters, driveways, and garages, in rustic style and shaded by shrubs of laurel and rhododendron, attracted the prominent and wealthy summer population which by that decade was giving a more elegant cachet to the resort town. The newer hotels were drawing summer people from places as distant as Florida. "The Blowing Rock" was changing from a

local natural curiosity to a tourist attraction: its legend was being embroidered and repeated far and wide, drawing the curious and helping to launch a family's fortune.

Blowing Rock was never Newport, Rhode Island, or some similar playground for the ostentatious rich; nationally, the income tax was making it harder for millionaires to maintain a money-is-no-object approach to summer leisure. Nevertheless, for many Southerners, and for visitors from farther afield, Blowing Rock was becoming fashionable. Mayview, which for a while in those years also was the name of a small golf course, was an address which conjured up a carefree but comfortable summer style.⁹

Some summer residents in this era brought with them, too, the freer, "modern" social habits which still could shock the older generation – and even younger traditionally reared Presbyterians. "At about the time Mayview was starting up the whole community was in a twitter. The Bridges twins, Ernestine and Ruth, had walked down Main Street in their riding pants!"¹⁰ A young seminary student and recent Davidson College graduate, Thomas Hugh Spence, Jr., son of a Presbyterian minister, recalled seeing "my first woman in the act of smoking a cigarette" on his way from a preaching appointment in Blowing Rock in 1922.¹¹

Making possible the development of the town had been the mundane but significant provision of public services during the immediately preceding years. If electricity and telephones were still mostly absent in the early 1920's,¹² another vital improvement had begun: better control over the community's water and waste. Public health concerns in Watauga County had attracted the attention of James Edwin Brooks, M.D., former superintendent of the State Sanatorium for Tuberculosis, who came to Blowing Rock to retire in 1914.

He was aghast at the opportunities that the tourist center offered for the spread of contagious diseases. Conditions were no doubt similar in most of the mountain villages, and the crowding in of summer visitors made the dangers of epidemics even greater. . . . Within the village the average family had a stable for the horse and one or more cows, a pigpen, a chicken lot, an outdoor privy, a spring, and a garden. No screens were used to keep the flies out of the houses. Garbage was thrown out to the pigs and chickens.

Making matters worse, according to Dr. Alfred Mordecai's later account, every hotel had "a retinue of stable boys and domestic servants, who were very prone to use the back lots and bushes instead of the surface privies provided for them." Thus epidemics like typhoid,

smallpox, and diphtheria had become serious matters in Watauga County. Dr. Brooks's solution was to call local townspeople together around his fireplace, where he patiently explained the health threats these habits were creating. "At 'smokers,' suppers, and other meetings the local citizens were roused to action." Speaking out at these meetings were, among others, two prominent Presbyterian summer people, the Rev. James I. Vance, and Charlotte lawyer and politician Cameron Morrison, who was elected Governor of North Carolina in 1920 and shortly afterward built a home in Mayview. "Soon the fly breeding places were eliminated. A chamber of commerce and other civic organizations developed from Dr. Brooks's work."¹³

"But who will preach for us and advise when dark days are near?" asked a long time Rumble church member, Mary E. Weedon, at Tufts's death in 1923.¹⁴ She and other members had for a quarter century been reassured by the continuity and comfort Tufts had provided for the congregation at Blowing Rock. But as the town found itself increasingly transformed by the postwar boom, so, too, did Presbyterian work in Watauga and Avery counties. In 1922, when Spence was invited to preach in Blowing Rock, he was "mildly thrilled at the prospect of speaking to such a congregation of the elite as assembled for worship at this resort." But he was not yet ordained, nor was he ever called to Rumble.

Two years later, just out of seminary and on a drive with friends to Banner Elk, Spence found that Tufts's church in Banner Elk still had no pastor. To this post he was called, and in October, 1924, he was ordained by Holston Presbytery, then in session at that place.¹⁵ Spence preached at Banner Elk, and at the chapel Tufts had established at nearby Arbor Dale, but did not assume his predecessor's other pulpits.

In the meantime, the work Tufts had begun at another of his outlying preaching points, Shulls Mills,¹⁶ had also passed to another man—and altered dramatically by the rapid development of timbering in the area. Tufts had held occasional services from 1917 on at the commissary of the Boone Fork Lumber Company, owned by William Scott Whiting. Logging and sawmill operations had brought some one thousand residents to the community by that time. In 1919, Joseph Shull, a descendant of the original eighteenth-century settler for whom

an earlier grist mill was named, gave land upon which to build a Presbyterian church. And from New York the next autumn came thirty-three year old Charles G. McKaraher, Jr., a graduate of Columbia College and the Bible Teachers' Training School of New York, to serve as religious director for the employees of Whiting's company. Before his move South, McKaraher had worked in New York city missions and with immigrant labor, and had served as YMCA Secretary in Lockport. Licensed in 1919 in Mecklenburg Presbytery, he was ordained in October of the following year in Holston Presbytery, and installed as pastor of the newly-built Shulls Mills Presbyterian Church.¹⁷

As is apparent from his background, McKaraher took a major interest in Christian education and in work among disadvantaged of all sorts. He was evidently drawn by the "Industrial Democracy" philosophy espoused by Whiting at the lumbering operation in Shulls Mills. Workers were to follow the principles of the Golden Rule; leading classes and meetings to inculcate such principles was apparently one of McKaraher's duties for the company. It was an era of corporate paternalism in many Southern industrial towns.¹⁸ Whiting, an elder in McKaraher's church, seems to have been more concerned than some with the welfare of his work force and their families, as is evident from his support for McKaraher's religious and educational efforts. McKaraher was to spend the last years of his life in Shulls Mills, as were the Whitings, even after the timbering ended and the company's operations and most of its employees moved elsewhere.¹⁹

Meanwhile, Blowing Rock Presbyterians still had no regular pastor. Spence seems not to have preached in Blowing Rock after his experience in 1922, but McKaraher came over from time to time during 1922 and 1923. Rumble Church records show him moderating the infrequent session meetings after Tufts's death. In May 1923 a congregational meeting discussed calling a minister; "it was decided to work out means and a way to secure a resident pastor which all agreeing was necessary for the best interest of the church." As McKaraher was then living in Shulls Mills, it is not clear whether this decision was intended as a way of encouraging him to settle in Blowing Rock, or whether the church at that point hoped to secure some other pastor. Just where a resident minister would have lived in 1923-24 is moot. Not until December 1926 were Joe White, Paul Klutts (sic) and Eugene Pitts appointed to a "building committee looking to the erection of a manse for the pastor," and five more years would go by until a house was built.

By April 1924 the session had decided to call McKaraher to the

Blowing Rock charge, for one-half his time, "beginning April 1st 1924." A congregational meeting to confirm this decision was held in December. The formalities of the call were observed at the spring meeting of Holston Presbytery in April, and McKaraher was installed at the church on May 7, 1925. "Present were Rev. W. C. Young, Rev. D. B. McLaughlin, Rev. McCoy Franklin, Rev. T. H. Spence, Jr., and Elder W. S. Whiting of Shulls Mills Presbyterian Church."²⁰

McKaraher served the church until the end of 1928. During his pastorate a number of "firsts" were observed. New members received into the fellowship included Ethel Holshouser and William L. Holshouser, Jr., Paul Kluttz, Dennis Underdown, Helen Underdown "by letter from Stephens Lutheran Church, Lenoir," Pauline, Doris, and William White. For the first time the session was enlarged, by the election of Howard Kluttz as elder in December 1926. The first deacons, Eubert Holshouser, Howard Holshouser, and H. C. Hayes, were installed that same Sunday. The first every member canvass since 1921 was undertaken by the deacons in 1926; it must have been successful, as another was authorized the year following. Another "first" was the printing of programs for the July and August services, for the summer crowd's support of church operations continued to be crucial. Many of the summer people directly involved themselves at the church whenever they were in town; among those long remembered from this era were the Knox sisters of Salisbury, members of Rumble's former church, all of them "maiden ladies," as the expression went, who often taught Sunday school in the summers and who, late in life, provided a memorial stone for a substantial tract of land in Banner Elk which their father, J. M. Knox, had given the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association in 1924.²¹

For the first time, too, the church building underwent a major face-lift.²² During the summer of 1927 an "advisory committee," consisting of Dr. Vance and summer resident Charles Cannon of Concord, met with the session "relative to recovering the Church and making necessary repairs." According to the session minutes, "W. L. Holshouser was instructed to buy slate roofing to cover the church as soon as approved by the architect." Dr. Martin a few years later recalled that the slate for the roofing project "was secured by Dr. Vance at a greatly reduced rate from a friend in Pennsylvania"; a receipted statement in the church records shows that Holshouser paid the Albion Vein Slate Company of Pen Argyl, Pennsylvania \$333.94 at the end of 1928. In addition to whatever break in price the company offered, it gave another two percent reduction to the church, perhaps for cash payment in full.

Architect for the project was Henry C. Hibbs (1882-1948) of Nash-

ville, a designer of ecclesiastical and educational buildings and an elder in Vance's church. Hibbs redesigned the facade and added the present portico, replacing the original porch.²³ Hibbs's remodeling, which extended the rustic gothic features of the main building, gave the church a much more harmonious appearance. A comparison of photographs before and after the renovation shows that the work was considerable: the entire east wall of the church was faced in stone all the way to the roof peak, covering the wood siding which had originally begun about nine feet above ground. New windows, to let more light into the sanctuary, were added about halfway up the facade. The redesigned entrance portico admitted worshippers through outside doors facing north and south, rather than through a door directly at the end of the main aisle. The east wall of the new portico, constructed of the same stone as the rest of the building, provided a recessed opening, framed by a stonework arch, which in the summer of 1929 was filled with a stained glass window depicting Christ praying for His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane. The window was given in memory of the church's first pastor, the Rev. Edgar Tufts. But as in the case of the Rumble window, no record of the contributors or of the window's manufacturer remains. The stone marker, "Rumble Memorial," was transferred to the new portico, but the carved stone lintel from the original porch was put to a curious use: part of it became a step to the new portico. Its abbreviated inscription, "fort Ye My People," is still legible to churchgoers entering the south door. What happened to the rest of the inscription (a portion of the famous verse from Isaiah 40:1, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, Saith the Lord")? No one now knows. Perhaps the stone broke when the old porch was taken down, or perhaps the lintel was just too long for a step and was cut to fit the space.

While the remodeling project was underway, the Episcopalians were completing Saint Mary's of the Hills Church across the street. According to local lore, when the builder, Marshall Foster, wanted a particularly suitable rock for the keystone in the arch of the main entrance, he found the one he needed in the pile the Presbyterians had gathered for their own remodeling. And thus the Rumble congregation was able to recompense its neighbors for the frequent use it had made of their old building in earlier days. "So the Presbyterians say the keystone of the Episcopal Church is a Presbyterian rock."²⁴

Redesign of the church entrance also served another function. The main door had been in direct line of sight of the pulpit; preachers had found themselves distracted during prayers and sermons by members of the congregation arriving late or departing early. The new portico did indeed place the entrances out of the line of the aisle, but the heavy

solid doors created another problem: no one inside could see who was coming in. In the early 1960's elders Rudolph Greene and Owen Coffey cut small windows in the doors, solving the problem in an attractive way.²⁵

At least half of the Rev. McKaraher's time, and no doubt an even larger part of his energy, he gave to a school at Shulls Mills, the Boone Fork Academy. It was one of several institutes or academies in the Synod of Appalachia which by the 1920's were nominally under Presbyterian control. As a function of home missions, presbyteries appointed their boards of trustees, but the schools actually depended almost entirely upon private funding; presbytery did little but commend them to the churches as worthy of support and encourage special offerings on their behalf.²⁶ In Holston Presbytery the churches themselves could not be counted on for much help: there were "few self-supporting churches within her bounds and none that could be called rich. . . . In taking over the four counties of North Carolina she assumed a tremendous Home Mission burden."²⁷

Tuition at such schools was of necessity kept very low; many poor children attended free. At Boone Fork in 1924, "Two dollars paid tuition for one month for a day student; five dollars, tuition for one month and board for one week; . . . twenty-five dollars, a teacher's salary for one month."²⁸ As of 1926, there were thirty-four pupils receiving scholarships, eighteen in the high school department. A teaching staff of five included the Rev. and Mrs. McKaraher. In 1924, partly with funds raised in presbytery, a boys' dormitory was erected. By about 1925 some \$8,000 had been invested in the school; but in that year presbytery decided to discontinue further funding. The school's operating debt reportedly reached \$1,950 by 1926. The 1921 deed to the school property had been made in the name of a joint board of trustees with the Shulls Mills Presbyterian Church which was to serve "for a term of five years, or until such time as the indebtedness upon the school property shall have been liquidated, at which time the school is to pass entirely under the care and control of Presbytery."²⁹

That time never came. Logging and milling operations in Shulls Mills were being terminated by 1926; employees were moving away. The following year, presbytery recommended discontinuing its supervision of the Boone Fork Institute, and, although Mrs. McKaraher

apparently purchased a part of the property in her own name early in 1927, the prospects for the school were dim. Its last year of operation was 1928.

At some time during that year, McKaraher seems to have made a desperate effort to revive the failing academy: a minister who was a member of a Mississippi presbytery, and something of a professional fundraiser, made a special appeal for money for the Institute during a service at the Blowing Rock church. Some \$700 was raised, no doubt largely from among the summer people. When it was discovered that presbytery had not authorized such efforts, McKaraher had to appear before a special commission of Holston Presbytery to explain his actions. In October, in executive session, the commission found McKaraher's explanations unsatisfactory; it also voted to lodge a complaint against the Mississippi-based preacher with his home presbytery. At the fall meeting of presbytery, McKaraher resigned as pastor of both the Shulls Mills and Blowing Rock churches, and was dismissed to the Presbyterian Church, USA.

It was a sad end to a worthy effort. By 1928, however, the public schools, and the roads, had improved enough to permit the dwindling number of Shulls Mills youth the chance to continue their education at Cove Creek Elementary and Banner Elk High Schools. As for McKaraher, he spent the years 1931 to 1935 back in a Southern Church pulpit, preaching at the Burnsville and Low Gap Presbyterian Churches. In 1936 he and his family took up residence in Shulls Mills; the *Ministerial Directory* listed him as "without charge" until he died on November 5, 1972 at the Watauga County Hospital.³⁰

If the actions against McKaraher seem unduly harsh by today's standards, they highlighted a chronic conflict in mission work and mountain education: schools provided by local governments continued until the 1920's to lag behind those available in larger towns and cities, thus encouraging home mission field workers to persevere in operating academies in rural areas where clear need existed. Yet the isolation and poverty of such regions made money-raising difficult and reliance on outside funding almost inevitable.

In a lengthy report to Holston Presbytery in 1929, the home missions committee reiterated that the "policy of the committee and the Presbytery with respect to schools and educational activities during this period [1925-1929] has been to eliminate as rapidly as possible all competition with public schools and at the same time to standardize the school work which is carried on. The result of this policy has been that most of the small schools of the church have been discontinued or consolidated with the public schools. The entire educational program

of the Presbytery, with respect to work above the elementary grades, now centers at Banner Elk where we have an accredited high school and a potential junior college.”³¹

A similar policy was being pursued throughout the denomination. In 1931 an *ad interim* committee of the General Assembly “acknowledged that mission schools had been planted too promiscuously and sometimes poorly located”; the Assembly that year reconfirmed its intent to turn over its work to public authorities wherever possible. “In 1925 fourteen mountain [high] schools were maintained by the Assembly’s Home Missions Committee. By 1934, there were only three, all in Kentucky.”³² An era in mission education was ending. The collapse of the work at Shulls Mills must be seen as part of this larger trend.

The departure of McKaraher again left the Blowing Rock church without a pastor. For more than a year the pulpit was officially listed as vacant. But in the interim, as he reported to Presbytery in 1929, “The Blowing Rock field has been supplied by the Superintendent of Home Missions and others.” This superintendent was the much-traveled Walter King Keys (1893–1973), who since 1925 had overseen “some remarkable advances” in home mission work in the region. Keys was a son of the Appalachian mountain region; he was to serve it and its people for most of his preaching career.

One of three children born in Washington County, Virginia to a country storekeeper, the young Keys experienced early the heavy responsibilities that often went with life in the economically dependent area. His father lost the store, and his land, in the depression of the 1890’s; then in 1904 he died, of exposure and cold. Keys’s mother continued working in what had been the family business, but the eleven year-old boy had to drop out of school and take various lumbering and sawmilling jobs to help support the family. At his mother’s insistence, Keys at sixteen went back to school. Early in life he had felt a call into the ministry. His father had nicknamed him “little preacher” even as a small child. And so, after finishing high school in Washington County and teaching school himself for a year, he entered King College in Bristol, Tennessee, in 1912.

King was one of a number of small Southern Presbyterian colleges struggling early in the century to serve both church and the community. Founded shortly after the Civil War, its original board hoped it

would become a theological seminary. Many of its first students were Confederate veterans who wore their old uniforms to class. But the school soon blossomed into a liberal arts college, with a curriculum modeled on that of the University of Virginia. It did produce numerous ministers, including the Revs. James I. and Joseph Vance, whose father was at one time president of its board of trustees. Tuition was minimal. A tiny endowment raised by the founders prevented it "on more than one occasion . . . from closing its doors."³³

Here Keys could study while living at home, repeating the experience of the Vance brothers. His classmates soon recognized Keys's talent for public speaking. He was elected senior class president and was valedictorian of the class of 1916. Keys stayed on to work for the Master's degree in 1917, then entered Union Seminary in Richmond, where he received the B.D. in 1920.³⁴ In the fall of 1921, Keys married Eleanor Fell Fickle, of Bristol, Virginia. He was called to a group of churches in Charles City and New Kent Counties, Virginia, from 1920 to 1922, and then to Providence Forge and Cool Springs churches, also in rural Virginia, until being named superintendent of home missions and evangelist for Holston Presbytery at its spring 1925 meeting.

From then until a breakdown forced him to resign his post in 1930, Keys traveled some ten thousand miles each year, visiting the churches, holding evangelistic services, and overseeing the various educational and fundraising operations of presbytery. Presbytery minutes of these years often included lengthy reports Keys prepared on his work. Two of his interests are especially evident from the record: his awareness of, and indeed promotion of, the area's potential for rapid economic development; and his concern to extend and upgrade the work and life of the region's churches. To Keys, the industrial growth of the area, and the newer type of agriculture which was producing crops for more distant markets, were bringing greater economic opportunity for the mountain people. "Huge enterprises and manufactories such as our fathers never dreamed of are rising in our midst," he wrote in 1929. "Certainly the outlook for this section is not a gloomy one. This means that there will be more people coming here all the while and more souls to be saved." To meet the need, he continually exhorted the churches to increase their level of giving while practicing "the utmost economy" in his own work.³⁵

During 1929 Keys moderated five session meetings at Rumple Church. Late that spring he conducted special services for several days which brought a number of local residents forward to be baptized and received into the church: Lois Klutz, Mary Klutz, Edith White, Oma Green, Mrs. Cecil Critcher, Opal Pitts, Mae Tester, Beulah Lee Tester,

and Cameron A. Williams. "Mrs. Lillie Hartley was received on statement of her having been member of the Reformed Church and restatement of her faith in Christ." Keys also urged the session to "place an electric sign board on the church yard, to have window cards, hotel signs, and a church paper covering the entire summer program printed." The session may well have considered calling Keys to the pastorate at Rumble, but early in 1930 his health failed him and he was forced to resign his post.³⁶ In 1934 Keys and his wife moved with their three children to Roan Mountain, Tennessee, where both taught school until 1939. But his work at Blowing Rock had made an impression on the congregation. In 1940 he would receive the first of two calls to Rumble Church.

During 1929 Keys recommended that presbytery "authorize the grouping of the Banner Elk, Blowing Rock, and Shulls Mill [sic] Churches under one pastorate, and approve the appointment of a committee . . . to confer with said churches in effecting arrangements for such grouping." But this virtual recreation of Tufts's charge never occurred. In 1929, after five successful years, which had included a year and a half's leave of absence for additional study in Edinburgh, Scotland, Spence attempted to resign his pastorate at the Banner Elk Church and accept another call; his church did not want to let him go. A committee appointed by presbytery, after investigating the matter, recommended he be allowed to move. At the spring 1930 meeting of presbytery, the "Banner Elk-Blowing Rock field" was reported vacant. "Earnest effort is being made to secure God's man for this field soon."³⁷

In the summer of 1930 another mountain preacher, the Rev. William R. Smith, Jr., a graduate of King College, 1915, and Union Seminary, 1924, left the pulpit of the Spruce Pine Presbyterian Church "to accept work as the director of religious activities with the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association at Banner Elk." Smith had spent a summer in the field at Shulls Mills while in seminary; he had served since 1926 on the staff of the Grandfather Home in Banner Elk. He would already have been familiar to many in the Blowing Rock church. On June 11, 1930, the session at Blowing Rock, moderated by the Rev. T. P. Johnson of Holston Presbytery, asked that Smith be appointed stated supply "until the next meeting of presbytery. The relationship is to con-

tinue until the request is made by session to discontinue it." On June 26, Smith got permission to "give to the Blowing Rock Church one-fourth his time as stated supply."

For almost exactly one year, until June 30, 1931, the Rev. Smith fulfilled his duties at Banner Elk and Blowing Rock, until he was granted a letter of dismission to Bluestone Presbytery in West Virginia. The Clerk of Presbytery at that time was "directed to write Mr. Smith a letter of appreciation of his services at Spruce Pine, N. C. and Banner Elk." Nothing was said of his services to Blowing Rock. Apparently Smith moderated just one session meeting (recorded only on a loose sheet of paper stuck in the minute book) during his year as stated supply; he undoubtedly considered his duties at Banner Elk his primary responsibility.³⁸

This time the Blowing Rock pulpit was not vacant for long. On June 26, 1931, the recently ordained, twenty-nine year-old Grundy Sexton Buchanan, originally of Rich Valley, in Smyth County, Virginia, took over as pastor. He had been evangelist in Holston Presbytery for several months, working out of Rogersville, Tennessee, since graduating from Union Seminary in 1930. Buchanan had entered King College "late in life" (he was twenty-two) because it had been necessary to go away to high school, in Abington, to complete his secondary education; he graduated from King in the class of 1927. The minister later recalled he had "Godly parents" who saw that the large family was "trained in the true teachings and Doctrines of the Holy Bible and in the Traditions of the Presbyterian Church." Married to Nita Kensinger in May 1930, they had four children: Andrew Sexton, John Gatewood, David Campbell, and Betty Graham. His call to the church was formalized at a congregational meeting in September 1931, at which he was unanimously chosen as Rumble's first full-time pastor. A presbytery committee installed him on November 8. Buchanan served in Blowing Rock until April 1939. He later went on to a long ministry, mostly at mountain churches in Virginia. He died in 1986 at age 84.³⁹

One of Buchanan's first actions was to attend to the spiritual life of his new congregation. "The session felt the need of a series of evangelistic services in the church and [set] the last two weeks in September" as the date, but for some reason the meetings were postponed until November. The Rev. John Martin assisted in these services. As often happened in such instances, the session shortly afterwards was called upon to examine individuals who presented themselves for baptism and church membership; some were relations of church members, a few were new to the fellowship. Joining in December 1931 were "Master William Teaster [sic]", William P. Klutz, Gladys Teaster, Bill White,

and Miss Helen Sudderth. Mrs. Don Johnson also joined at this time, transferring her membership from a Baptist church, and her "little infant son, Steven Hawthorne Johnson" was baptized. The Rev. Martin attended this session meeting, no doubt to celebrate with the pastor the call of God to these new Christians.⁴⁰ By the end of the church year 1931, membership stood at fifty.

Another of Buchanan's obligations was to insure the church observed the *Book of Church Order*. Session meetings were to be held quarterly; they had been infrequent during the nearly two years the pulpit was vacant. The sacrament of communion was to be celebrated quarterly. And, "Due to the fact that the present plan of church finance seems inadequate, the Session unanimously adopted the envelope system and orders that it be put in practice immediately." The Depression years, and the absence of a regular pastor, had indeed been hard on the church's finances. Total giving for all causes during 1930 had been only \$975, but in 1932 the church reported \$3340 in receipts. The new pastor's salary still was supplemented from presbytery home mission funds, but increasingly the local congregation was being drawn into the support of the church, which grew greatly under his leadership.⁴¹

According to the *Watauga Democrat* in June, 1933, the "Rev. Buchanan has been taken in by the people of Blowing Rock and accepted as one of them and has made myriads of friends throughout the county." It was probably he who provided the church's nickname, "The Friendly Little Gray Church on the Mountain Top": the church was so "known to the thousands of tourist and resort followers" who visited in this period.⁴² Buchanan also helped to build the congregation's physical resources. During his years at Rumble, two structures which served the church for more than a generation were completed: a manse and a Sunday school plant. And as had become the pattern, summer residents played a major part in helping build his legacy.

A fulltime pastor with a growing family needed a house to live in. For five years such a project had been stalled. But at the first session meeting Buchanan moderated, the decision was made to build a manse "on [the] church lot at [the] rear of [the] church"; it was actually built on the south side of the church, approximately where the 1970 educational building now stands.⁴³ Dr. Vance preached a sermon and asked for a special offering on the fourth Sunday in July, 1931; \$787 was collected toward the project in that Depression summer. The session authorized elder Joe White to draw up the plans and go ahead with the building, "appropriating money as far as [it] would go, and to secure as much free labor as possible." By November the job was done, at a cost of \$2,000. It is not clear from the record how the rest was raised, or

which local people supplied the labor, but in March 1935, Eubert Holsouser, deacon and church treasurer, reported that "all bills were paid and obligations were met."

March, 1933, marked a major psychological turning point in the economically depressed nation. Renewed public confidence had its reflection in Blowing Rock. When the church elders and deacons met around the pastor's supper table at the new manse on March 7, just three days after the inauguration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, "a general discussion was held regarding the world condition relative to the church." The Rev. D. C. Amick, presbytery evangelist, was present to "bring out the church's need and God's challenge to his people." At a well-attended preaching service afterwards, Amick took his text from Malachi 3: 8-10: "Will a man rob God? . . . Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." "The sermon was helpful and forceful," the minutes recorded. "We hope much good will come from this meeting. A determinate manifestation was to continue work by the help of God. Plans were made to have every member canvas on Sunday, March 19th."

During the summer of 1933, the church co-sponsored with the Banner Elk Presbyterian Church a Bible conference which brought the Rev. Dr. F. Crossley Morgan, "one of the greatest living expositors of God's Word," to lead a week-long series of meetings at both places. "Trained for the Christian ministry by his father, Dr. G. Campbell Morgan," the well-known author, minister, and Bible teacher, the younger Morgan had been decorated for service in the British Army during First World War, and for several years had served Presbyterian pulpits throughout the South before going full time into Bible conference work. His appearance in Rumble's pulpit indicated the nature of the outreach the church was making to residents and summer people alike.⁴⁴

As the church's membership increased, so, too, did its need for additional space. Sunday school enrollment by 1935 had reached 145, including the Cradle Roll, with a total of ten teachers and officers. But local resources remained inadequate to enlarge the church plant: out of a total of seventy-eight on the church roll, thirty members subscribed to the every member canvas in 1935, but their pledges toward local work and benevolences combined came to only \$561.⁴⁵

In its need, the session did not hesitate once again to turn to summer residents for help. The first Sunday in August, 1935, was set aside

for a special offering “for the general expenses of the church.” No record remains of the amount collected, but it must have come nowhere near what was hoped. At a congregational meeting that September, “A question was put before the house as to whether we would try and build a Sunday School plant or install a heating system in the main summer auditorium—there was [a] unanimous vote to install heat . . . and due to lack of funds . . . trust to future for our cherished dream of a Sunday School plant.” By November 1935, excavation work and installation of the first central heating system for the stone church was completed. The Sunday school building would have to wait.⁴⁶

As the summer of 1936 approached, Blowing Rock Presbyterians began making plans to observe the church’s fiftieth anniversary. One of the curiosities in the church’s history is the decision to pick 1936, and not 1937, to celebrate the occasion. To be sure, the building had been erected, and dedicated by Dr. Rumble, fifty years earlier. But such careful followers of the *Book of Church Order* as the Revs. Buchanan, Vance, and Vardell, and Dr. Martin, must have known that until presbytery orders a church name entered on its roll, and accepts members, formal organization has not been effected. In Blowing Rock’s case this did not occur until July, 1887. What clues exist for the decision to celebrate the semicentennial a year early?

Still at the church are some of the materials collected for the event. Someone, presumably Buchanan, obtained in 1936 excerpts of Concord Presbytery records from the Historical Foundation at Montreat. These materials, along with some information on the church’s current affairs, he turned over to Dr. Vardell, who seems to have been the guiding spirit behind preparing the sketch of the church’s history. Vardell, in turn, delegated to his brother-in-law, Dr. Martin, the job of writing up the story of the building of the rock church. The original typescript of several pages covering only that subject, signed by Martin, is still extant in the church papers. These two men, along with elder Eubert Holshouser, would read the history to the congregation on July 26, 1936. Interestingly, the typed pages obtained from Montreat were “corrected” in longhand at some point by someone to make 1886 instead of 1887 the date for the church’s organization. So a mis-

taken choice of date, if there was one, would most likely have been made by Vardell. Perhaps he had actually convinced himself that the records of Concord Presbytery were in error!

But another clue exists as to why the celebration took place in 1936. By that year, all the church's living links to its founding were in retirement. Vardell had turned over leadership of Flora MacDonald to a younger man in 1930. Martin had retired as president of the Assembly's Training School in 1933. And in 1936 Dr. Vance stepped down as pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Nashville; ill health now plagued the once-powerful preacher who over the years had done so much for the Blowing Rock church and community. No doubt all three men were feeling keenly their own mortality. It is significant that Vance apparently took no active part at the 1936 anniversary service, although he was most certainly in attendance. The celebration seems to have been entirely the idea of these men, in any case; nothing in the minutes shows the session ever discussed the matter. Might they not have feared that at least one of their number might not live to see the true anniversary date?

Whatever the motive, the celebration was observed on July 26, 1936. The program included an organ prelude played by Dell Bernhardt (Mrs. Henry) Wilson, a summer resident from Lenoir, who would later write *The Grandfather and the Globe*, a fictionalized account of local experiences during the Civil War. Hers was one of four generations of the Bernhardt family to summer in Blowing Rock. A soprano solo was sung by Christine Henkel, member of a "transplant" family originally of Lenoir and Statesville risen to prominence by its real estate transactions and ties to the summer community; but she was not a Rumble Church member. The choir sang an anthem by composer Charles Gounod, "Father of Heaven," which, the bulletin noted, had been played at the dedication of the first church.⁴⁷ This fact could have been known to only a few people living. Perhaps Linda Rumble Vardell, herself an accomplished musician, knew it from her mother.

The main address that Sunday, "Our Church—What She Has Done, Is Doing, and May Do," compiled by Vardell and Martin and later retyped and widely circulated locally, has served until now as the only written history of the church and has been cited frequently in this account. Several items in it of interest as of 1936, however, should be noted, as should some of its omissions.

First, it included a page tracing the relationship between the church and the Grandfather Orphanage in Banner Elk. Vardell recounted his visit to Tufts's work in 1918, described his first collection of \$1000 from the summer congregation at Rumble, and listed the amount of

the annual offerings to date. The source for the figures Vardell gave is not known; if any records had been kept at the church, they have since disappeared. The Grandfather collections were at this time usually kept "off the books," anyway; they were not tallied among other church benevolences in the annual reports to the General Assembly. Possibly the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association supplied the numbers, but more likely they came from Vardell's own accounts, since all along the project had been dear to his heart. Up to 1936, the highest annual amount collected was \$4,421.39 in 1925; but the 1927 sum was almost as high: \$4,305.07. After reaching \$4,000.00 in 1930, collections dropped to a Depression low of \$2,530.73 in 1933; but by 1935 the amount had crept back upward to \$2,660.78. Altogether the church had contributed \$43,364.61 to the Home by 1936.

By including in the church's history an account of the work done on the Home's behalf, Vardell undoubtedly did much to hallow the tradition. New promoters were soon to step forward who would help raise the amounts collected to even greater heights, but Grandfather Home Sunday has remained the single largest benefaction ever undertaken at Rumble Church.

Another segment of the church's history described the support provided to the work of Mary G. Warfield, M.D., who had moved to Blowing Rock "In the providence of God" and at the urging of a number of local and summer people concerned especially for the "care of the mountain women at the time of childbirth." In 1928 she began a medical practice which lasted almost twenty years. Dr. Warfield joined Rumble Church in 1941. Her clinic was consistently supported, both by the local members and the summer residents, from the time of her arrival; she made many house calls as well. The care of infants and children was her chief interest: she held free "well baby" clinics and "tonsil clinics" for local residents, and as her practice grew, she needed a more permanent facility in which to work. A building just behind Rumble Church was erected and equipped for her between 1933 and 1935. Up to 1936 church members and summer people had donated more than five thousand dollars' worth of land, labor, and materials, while church offerings had procured several items of specialized equipment.

To Dr. Warfield's work may be traced the origins of today's Blowing Rock Hospital. She retired to Tryon, N.C. in early 1947, turning over her practice to Dr. Charles Davant. And so the church had played a part in providing the community with its first modern health care facility. The sense of mission which Presbyterians had so often dis-

played in their dedication to schooling and to medical work had left another legacy of community service in Blowing Rock.⁴⁸

The 1936 historical account said nothing about the important activities of the local Women's Auxiliary, or as such groups were becoming known in the denomination by the 1930's, the Women of the Church. As another form of community service and as a means for encouraging women's devotional worship, however, it deserved mention.⁴⁹ The first record of women's work at the Blowing Rock church went back to 1906, when Mrs. Gaither Hall attended a meeting of the Women's Home and Missionary Union of Concord Presbytery, held in Salisbury that September. She was elected vice-president of the group for Watauga County. No records show the extent of that body's activity locally, and as Mrs. Hall moved away in 1907, it is uncertain who, if anyone, provided leadership after her departure.⁵⁰

Then "on a cold, snowy day, January 30, 1930," Mrs. J. H. VonCanon and Mrs. W. C. Tate, two prominent members of the Banner Elk Presbyterian Church, came over to meet at Mrs. W. L. Holshouser's home with a number of the Blowing Rock church women to help organize an Auxiliary. The original officers were: Mrs. H. F. Ingle, president, Mrs. H. P. Holshouser, vice-president, Mrs. E. G. Underdown, secretary, and Mrs. W. L. Holshouser, treasurer. "Friends from the Baptist church and the school . . . joined the Auxiliary in the observance of the day of prayer for schools and colleges." That summer the women of Holston Presbytery held a group conference at Rumble Church; "there were fifty-six ladies present, also several resident summer visitors."

By the late 1930's, some of the projects which the Women of the Church had sponsored included: serving for Grace Hospital, and sending sheets and baby gowns to that cause in Banner Elk; taking collections for the "Birthday Projects" supported by the denomination's Women of the Church;⁵¹ holding "weeks of prayer and self-denial" and Bible study classes for the membership; sponsoring the first Daily Vacation Bible School in the summer of 1933; canning goods for shipment to Grandfather Home, starting in 1934; and making curtains for the new Sunday school building in 1936-7. Combined membership in two WOC circles by the time of the semicentennial stood at 25.⁵² The educational and service function of this organization is difficult to calculate, but it must have been great. For many women it served as their chief social outlet; for the church it was an important source of strength, both spiritual and material. It continues to play a key role in the life of the church to this day.

Annie Ludlow Cannon loved children. By 1936 she had generously supported for more than twenty years Presbyterian causes in Concord, in the mountains, and elsewhere. She and her husband Joseph F. Cannon during the 1920's built "Miramichi," the summer cottage in Mayview Park where she lived for some forty years. Nearby was the summer home of her brother-in-law, Ross Cannon, and his wife. Other Cannons, Charles A. "Charlie" Cannon and James "Jim" Cannon, also had summer places in town. All attended Rumble Church and aided its work; but Annie Cannon was closest to the young people.

Probably no layperson so touched the lives of Rumble children as did Annie Cannon. Not only have both the church's educational buildings been made possible by her generosity; she was herself a dedicated Christian teacher. Many now in middle age remember her "Good News Bible Classes," which were open to all the town's youth. Her teaching was strikingly visual, and to a generation that had never seen television, and rarely a movie, her method left behind vivid impressions of the Biblical scenes and spiritual lessons she described. Using an easel to hold her large storyboard, she placed her oil-painted characters and symbols, backed with felt, against a flannel background, where they adhered during the story, or were easily moved as appropriate to the lesson. If now and then a piece fell to the floor, it only added to the children's delight. Her work was sponsored in Blowing Rock, Concord, and other places by the interdenominational Child Evangelism Fellowship. In her mature years she carried her lessons widely to other churches, local summer camps and adult groups as well.

For the teenagers and young adults of the community, the Cannons' house was frequently open on Sunday evenings for hymn singing, refreshments, and fellowship. Older summer residents, too, often attended; here the generations met and some of the barriers between "local" and "summer" people were overcome.⁵³ Until her death in March, 1965, at Blowing Rock, Annie Cannon seems to have demonstrated the gift of Christian charity to all she knew. She commanded nearly universal affection and respect, for despite disparities of wealth, she mixed amiably with many local people, regularly visiting prayer circle meetings, for example, at the home of Mrs. Martha Tester, who counted Mrs. Cannon "one of her dearest friends."⁵⁴

Born in Winston-Salem in 1887, the same year Rumble Church was organized, she and her husband reared three children of their own, as well as a granddaughter, Anne Cannon Reynolds, who in 1938 joined

Rumple Church on profession of faith at age eight. By 1936 Mrs. Cannon had convinced her husband that she should provide in her will for Rumple Church; she was determined that the children she had come to love would have adequate facilities there, and that the congregation would be able to worship comfortably all year around. Yet she was not satisfied. It took some more convincing, but in that year she persuaded Joe Cannon that the project should not have to await her death.⁵⁵ And so on Sunday, May 24, 1936, after church, she met with the session and "expressed her desire to build on adequate Sunday School rooms to the church and ask[ed] the permission of the session to do so, which was done with a deep appreciation of what Mrs. Cannon is and does for our church. The session voted to maintain said building after it is builded."

Mrs. Cannon and Buchanan named the building committee: "Rev. G. S. Buchanan, ex-officio; Howard Holshouser, chairman; Joe White, Ed Underdown, Clark Brown, Mrs. W. L. Holshouser, W. L. Holshouser. The committee was to begin at once to plan and begin building." Everyone on the committee was a long-time local member except for Brown; he and his wife and two daughters lived three years, 1935-1938, in Blowing Rock, then returned to Jefferson, where they rejoined the Jefferson Presbyterian Church.⁵⁶

By the semicentennial summer, then, work on the building was well underway. Contractor for the project was Cameron A. Williams, a church member after 1929 and builder of a number of homes in Blowing Rock. The work was done the old-fashioned way, with mules and drag pans; no mechanized equipment had yet appeared in town. Numerous local men worked on the project. Former clerk of session Rudolph Greene remembers helping lay floor tiles and doing other jobs; he was fourteen at the time.⁵⁷

The building measured twenty-eight by fifty-four feet and was two stories high. Detached from the stone church, it projected some ten feet beyond the line of the original building on the north and came about even with it on the south. A covered alcove allowed passage from the two buildings; here the choir would wait on summer Sundays to enter the choirloft of the main sanctuary directly from an outside door. Above its rock foundation the new wing was finished in wood shingles. "On the first floor is a large room for the infant class, three other classrooms, a kitchen, a hall measuring 27 feet long by 10 feet 6 inches, and a furnace room that can be used as a classroom. The second floor is an auditorium with a rostrum and floor space measuring 40 by 27 feet."⁵⁸ Over the next thirty-five years, the structure served as Sunday school plant and winter chapel as well; for it had become clear that

the heating system just installed in the rock church was inadequate. The "auditorium," considerably remodeled and refurbished in recent years, still serves as winter chapel. In April 1987 it was named the Keys Chapel "To Honor the Ministry and Lives" of Dr. and Mrs. Keys, "Whose service to this Church and the Community of Blowing Rock endeared them to all."

Sunday, October 4, 1936, the day after the building was completed, a special all-day program celebrated the event, "setting [the new structure] apart to the teaching and preaching ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ." A "Rally Day Program" called "The Lighted Way" involved all the children—membership in the church school had reached 175 by 1936—during the morning. Buchanan delivered an address. Dinner on the grounds was served afterwards "to a large gathering." That afternoon "appropriate dedication services were held," the pastor preaching from Matthew 16:18: "I will build my Church." After the consecration, "The service was appropriately closed by the observance of the Lord's Supper." In a "Historical Note" for the session records Buchanan wrote, "This building was presented to the congregation by Mrs. Joe Cannon who paid for the erection of the building. May God bless her richly for this glorious deed and service to Him who is the great head of the Church."⁵⁹

The new facilities led to an extension of the church's Sunday school program, and permitted other, wider outreach. The 1937 records provided a full list of teachers and workers then active: J. E. ("Peck") Holshouser, superintendent; L. D. (Dow) Tester, assistant superintendent; Mrs. W. L. Holshouser, treasurer; and Bob Hardin, secretary. Teachers were: men's Bible class, the Rev. Buchanan; women's Bible class, Mrs. W. L. Holshouser and Mrs. L. D. (Martha) Tester; young people's class, Mrs. Jane Story; intermediate girls' and boys' class, Mrs. Don Johnson; junior girls, Mrs. Buchanan; junior boys, Mrs. Jessie Burns; primary department, Mrs. Bill Holshouser; beginners' department, Mrs. J. E. Holshouser. A nursery and cradle roll department was unassigned that year.

In 1937, the church gave over use of its new facilities to the fall meeting of Holston Presbytery. "The session voted to buy necessary foods which would not be donated such as the meats for the dinner to be served to Presbytery on Tuesday, October 5, 1937. And all necessary arrangements were made to cooperate in making Presbytery comfortable and happy while here."⁶⁰ In 1938 session also voted to "sponsor the Boy Scout Troop No. 42 of Blowing Rock for the coming year 1939."⁶¹ The church at last had a plant which met the needs of its year round membership and allowed it a greater community role.

During the interwar period, and for many years to come, the color line was still observed in Blowing Rock. The town had practically no permanent black residents. But the black "help" many of the summer people brought with them—chauffeurs, cooks, "nurses" for their children—were not accepted in the local churches. Rumble Church apparently allowed "the colored people" to use the old Sunday school room for services on Sunday evenings; it is not clear when this practice began. At a session meeting in June, 1932, the matter was discussed: would the practice go on that summer "as usual"? The session declared itself "not in favor of granting this permission, due to the fact that the young people of the church had spent a considerable sum of money to fix up the Sunday School room for their own use. The session advised, however, that the authorities be notified to this effect, and that special effort be made to secure another place." If none was found, the session agreed to reconsider the matter.⁶²

Apparently none was. In early July the session met again on the issue. "It was decided to grant them permission, *but* should Dr. Vance, Dr. Vardell, or Dr. [sic] Dunn or other ministers decide to have services for them they are welcome to do so, but we refuse to turn over service to colored people without white supervision." The following summer the session was even more negative: the "colored people's" use of the building conflicted with Rumble's own evening program; "some among us feel offended"; the building was "in constant use" on Sundays, which prevented it being used by others; "we feel constrained to refuse the use of the church to the colored people. . . . The pastor was ordered to write the session's action to these colored people requesting services."⁶³

But next month the session members relented a bit. Perhaps Vance, Vardell, and Dunn convinced them to permit use of the Sunday school room for a service on August 6, 1933; "this is not a permanent arrangement."⁶⁴ No record shows what happened in 1934, but in July 1935 the session met at Will Holshouser's store to go over the issue again. "All objections were brought out coming from others. After thoughtful and prayerful discussion, it was unanimously decided . . . to permit the colored people to use the Sunday school room with the understanding that the service was to begin at 8:30 p.m. and close at 9:30. This was due to the fact that long services have been held heretofore—to the interference and disturbance of the hospital at rear of church."⁶⁵ Here

matters stood for several years; not until the late 1940's, and another generation of leaders emerged, would new arrangements for the blacks' worship be worked out.

By the end of the 1930's, Rumble Memorial's membership had increased to 116. A fulltime pastor had obviously proved of enormous benefit to the congregation's growth and outreach. But the church's budget still did not allow for full support of the pastor's salary; Buchanan continued to get supplements from presbytery's home missions committee. Despite a doubled membership at the church, the minister got only one salary increase in seven full years of service, from \$810 to \$900 in 1934. The amount of presbytery's support had risen from \$400 to \$480 by 1939. His housing was of course taken care of. It is quite possible that some summer residents assisted him with gifts which went unreported, and he got paid for an occasional service conducted in some other church. Still, with a growing family to support, his checks would not have stretched far.

The grand total raised in the church year 1938 from the permanent membership, for current expenses and for regular benevolent causes, was only \$1505.96. The congregation had for several years been taking up a special summer collection to help cover its regular expenses; and in March 1939, as budget time again approached, the session discussed "raising our unsubscribed budget by private subscription among summer friends, thus eliminating the annual summer offering if possible." But the following month, after the session had accepted the next year's budget, which again foresaw no salary increase for the pastor, Buchanan asked to resign. Although the record says nothing of his reasons, he may have been discouraged by the church's inability to pay all of his support.⁶⁶

Buchanan's request touched off nearly a year of difficult times. The congregational meeting called to discuss his resignation resulted in a vote to keep him on; another meeting had to be convened to release him, for Buchanan had by then accepted a call to the Mount Carmel Church in Lee County, Virginia. A pulpit committee met several times, apparently without result, and Dr. Vardell was asked to "assist in supplying the pulpit until a pastor is secured." A "Rev. Mr. Fox" assisted at several services; he preached on the Sunday Mrs. Cannon joined by transfer of her church letter, on October 8, 1939. A congrega-

tional meeting later that month called the Rev. Frank King, then serving several churches in and around Bristol, Virginia. But King did not come: he soon became instead assistant pastor at Idlewild Church in Memphis.

The Rev. John Yelton, home missions superintendent for Holston Presbytery, preached and also moderated a number of session meetings during this period. A product of Plumtree School and a summer worker at Shulls Mills in earlier days, Yelton would have been familiar with the area, and also with the recovery to health of the man who had been his predecessor at presbytery. It was Yelton who, at a meeting in March, 1940, "after telling of the life and work of Rev. Keys, asked the congregation to vote by ballot on the question of calling Rev. Keys to the pastorate." The vote was overwhelmingly in favor. Keys was given the annual salary of \$1500, only about \$120 more than his predecessor had received, but subventions from presbytery were no longer requested. Keys was to be the first pastor at Rumble Church fully supported from locally-donated funds. A new and still more active chapter in Rumble Memorial's history was about to open.⁶⁷

Notes for Chapter Three

1. "Business Section of Blowing Rock Almost Completely Destroyed," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 12. "Around Town," *ibid.*, p. 37.
2. "From the Charlotte Observer: Improvements Made In Blowing Rock," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 13. The *Observer's* owner from 1892 to 1914, Daniel A. Tompkins, had a summer home in Blowing Rock from 1909 until his death. The newspaper, under his successors, was a strong supporter of the North Carolina "Good Roads" movement, which was a great benefit to the state's mountain regions. Claiborne, *The Charlotte Observer*, pp. 141, 143.
3. The road from Valle Crucis via Shulls Mills to Blowing Rock was also apparently a toll road until about this time: Lois Hayes, "An Account of the Shulls Mills Settlement Until 1940," in Sanna Gaffney, *et. al.*, *The Heritage of Watauga County, North Carolina, Volume I, 1984* (Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Co., 1984), pp. 71-73. Hereinafter cited as Hayes, "An Account."
4. Letter, Dr. W. J. Martin to W. J. Martin III, July 13, 1921, in W. J. Martin papers, Davidson College Library. By this date the Martins also had a summer home at Montreat; Martin had bought a lot there in 1913. The family spent part of each summer at each place.
5. "Around Town," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 7.
6. "Autos Brings [sic] About Early Changes," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 62.
7. "From the Charlotte Observer: Improvements Made in Blowing Rock," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 13.
8. "Early Horse Show Days Recalled," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 66.
9. Vardell-Gage, "Blowing Rock Memories." According to Gage's recollection, Mayview was named by artist Elliott Dangerfield for his first wife.
10. Ernestine may thus have attracted the eye of Mayview developer Walter Alexander; she later became his wife: *ibid.*
11. Thomas Hugh Spence, Jr., *An Annotated Autobiography* (Montreat, NC: For Private Distribution, 1981). p. 39. Hereinafter cited as Spence, *Autobiography*.
12. William C. Cannon of Concord, who has summered at Blowing Rock since he was a year old (he was born in 1913) recalls that his family's place, now owned by his sister and her husband, Mariam and Bob Hayes, across from the Green Park Inn, had its own electric generator and water supply, a tank in the attic supplied from a spring which had to be filled every day. Oral interview, January 1987. See also Vardell-Gage, "Blowing Rock Memories," section titled "Utilities." Rumble Church seems to have been wired for electricity in late

1923; the first record in Holshouser's accounts of a bill "for electric lights," in the amount of \$6, was paid in November of that year. RMPC Session Records, old book, p. 115.

13. Ina Woestmeyer Van Noppen and John J. Van Noppen, *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War* (Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1973), pp. 110-111, citing Alfred Mordecai, "James Edwin Brooks, M.D." (*North Carolina Medical Journal* [June, 1958]).

14. Letter, M. E. Weedon to Bessie Tufts, 4.20.23., kindly provided to the author by Margaret Tufts Neal.

15. Spence, *Autobiography*, pp. 39-42.

16. The name of the settlement is spelled alternately Shull's Mill, Shulls Mills, and Shull's Mills in various accounts. It seems the church, when it was registered in Presbytery, was called the Shulls Mills Presbyterian Church.

17. *Ministerial Directory*, 1940 edition. Neal, *Sacred Flame*, p. 78. Hayes, "An Account," pp. 71-73. The Shulls Mills Church was organized October 10, 1919, with eleven charter members; W. S. Whiting and C. D. Fox were elected and installed as elders: Minutes of Holston Presbytery, fall 1920 meeting.

18. Tindall, *Emergence of the New South*, pp. 326-330. Kate Peterson, "Boone Fork Institute," *Watauga County Times . . . past* (September 1984), pp. 2-5.

19. Hayes, "An Account," p. 73.

20. RMPC Session Records, pp. 20-23; Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring 1925 and fall 1925. The Rev. Christopher McCoy Franklin, a Crossnore native, was "president and co-founder" of the Crossnore School and pastor of the Crossnore Presbyterian Church, 1920-1933; *Ministerial Directory*, 1975 ed.

21. Neal, *Sacred Flame*, p. 116-117; and oral interviews with Jo Greene, July 1987, and William Cannon, January 1987. The Cannon home was next door to the Knoxes, across from the Green Park Inn. Cannon remembers the Knox sisters as "wonderful neighbors" and loyal Presbyterians; they always kept his family informed as to who was preaching each week at the church. None of the sisters ever married; the story went that their father never found any man worthy enough for them.

22. In 1921 a Sunday school room had been added at the rear of the church, with \$450 borrowed from Lees-McRae Institute. No picture or description of this room has survived. It was removed during the construction of the chapel wing in 1936: RMPC session records, p. 18.

23. RMPC, Session Minutes, Book I; Martin, "1936 History," p. 6. Hibbs also designed the new Maxwell B. Chambers building at Davidson during this period. In 1929 he received gold medals for his church and college building architecture at the Southern Exhibit in Memphis: *Who's Who in America*, 1948-49 edition.

24. Vardell-Gage, "Blowing Rock Memories."

25. Interview with Rudolph Greene, December 1986. Greene recalled that while he and Coffey were working on the project, Rev. Blake Brinkerhoff drove by the church and saw the work in progress, but did not notice Coffey, who was working inside. The next Sunday in church the preacher told the congregation what a great job Greene had done, not acknowledging Coffey. Greene remembered he "felt like falling through the floor," but Coffey "got a kick out of it."

26. The Manual of Abingdon Presbytery charged the home missions committee "To have the oversight of mission schools, the superintendent visiting the schools and examining the pupils on their Bible course . . . [and] to guarantee the salaries of all workers, seeing that as much as possible is raised in the field, and the balance paid from our treasury." Presumably Holston Presbytery had similar arrangements: Edward Marshall Craig, comp. and ed., *Highways and Byways of Appalachia: A Study of the Work of the Synod of Appalachia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States* (Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, 1927), p. 31.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

28. Peterson, "Boone Fork Institute," pp. 3-4.

29. Minutes of Holston Presbytery, fall 1921 meeting.

30. *Ministerial Directory*, 1956 edition; information on his death from Watauga County Register of Deeds Office.

31. Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring 1929 meeting.

32. Ernest Trice Thompson, *Presbyterian Missions in the Southern United States* (Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1934), p. 239 and *passim*.

33. Tilden Scherer, "King College," in *Highways and Byways*, pp. 101-110; quotation on pp. 108-109. Scherer had been chosen president of the college in 1911. In 1917 King moved to a new campus outside of town; in 1931 it became co-educational when mounting debts forced the closing of Stonewall Jackson College for women in Abingdon, which was consolidated with King: Thompson, *Presbyterians*, III, 171-173.

34. "This is Your Life," scrapbook compiled by Carolyn Forrest, 1963, as a tribute to Keys at his retirement from Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church. Lent to the author by his daughter, Julia Keys Williams.

35. Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring 1929 meeting, pp. 29-30. The section Keys prepared on "Home Mission Work in Holston Presbytery," in *Highways and Byways*, pp. 41-50, also touts the scenic splendors of the region; Keys asked his readers, "Would it not be both delightful and profitable for the members of our churches to visit the Home Mission work of Holston Presbytery and at the same time see the wonders of the country in which it is being carried on? Let's 'See Holston Presbytery, and the Synod of Appalachia, first.'" Keys later became one of Blowing Rock's most enthusiastic promoters of tourism: during the early 1950's he served as secretary of the town's chamber of commerce; see next chapter.

36. RMPC Session Records, pp. 30-32. Early in 1931, Mrs. Keys wrote to Presbytery gratefully acknowledging the continuation of Keys's salary through the year 1930, but told Presbytery it "had done all they had a right to expect, that there was no possibility Mr. Keys would soon be able to undertake the strenuous work of superintendent," and that the committee should seek another for the position: Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring 1931 meeting.

37. Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring 1930 meeting.

38. *Ibid.*, spring 1931 meeting. RMPC session records, old book, pp. 33-34. *UTS General Catalog*, p. 199. The work Tufts and McKaraher had done at Shulls Mills was a seedbed of later service: in addition to Smith, another summer field worker, the Rev. John Yelton, would go on to hold important posts in Holston Presbytery. Still another who worked there during the 1920's was R. H. Hardin, M.D., whom Whiting had hired to provide medical care for his employees. In 1925 Hardin moved with his family to Banner Elk, where he became a permanent member of the staff at Grace Hospital: Neal, *Sacred Flame*, pp. 148-150.

39. RMPC Session Records, Book I, pp. 24-27. Perhaps as a way of learning the church's history, Buchanan in 1932 copied in his own hand all the earlier session minutes into a new book. Comparison with the original records shows he made a few errors; to this point I have cited the original records. His installation: Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring 1932 meeting, p. 12. His service: *Ministerial Directory*, 1983 edition, and "A Reflective Autobiographical Sketch of the Life and Ministry in the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. of Grundy Sexton Buchanan," in WOC History of Sinking Springs Presbyterian Church, Hot Springs, Va., for 1971, at Historical Foundation, Montreat. Buchanan later called his ministry at Blowing Rock "a most happy" one. In addition to the building of the manse and educational building, he recalled that "the foundation for a church was laid in the nearby town of Boone" during his time.

40. RMPC, Session Records, Book I, pp. 38-39. The Rev. Martin held another series of services in late November, 1935; fifteen additional members were added at that time. Most were descendants of the various families who by now were making up much of the local membership: Greenes, Walsers, Whites.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 34. Excerpts from statistical tables in Minutes of General Assembly of PCUS, prepared for the church March 13, 1933 by Historical Foundation, Montreat, N.C.; in RMPC records.

42. "Little Stone Presbyterian Church At Blowing Rock Attracts Visitors," *Watauga Democrat*, June 1, 1933, p. 3. The article by Arnold Coffey gave a short history of the church, used a picture of Dr. Vance as illustration, and listed the entire fifty-seven person membership. Jim O'Dell, ASU graduate student and son of former elder Jim O'Dell, kindly supplied this reference.

43. The building of the manse necessitated moving some grave markers which had stood on the church's south side, presumably dating from the congregation's earliest days. Old photographs show a few headstones on the site; these were apparently put under the stone church at this time.

44. "Bible Conference," pamphlet for August 6-11, 1933, services, in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I.

45. RMPC Session Records, new book, p. 57.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

47. Church Bulletin, July 26, 1936; original preserved in Perry Lentz's family, copies in church records.

48. 1936 History," p. 8; "Mary Campbell Warfield Was Dedicated Doctor of 1930-1946," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 21. Much of Dr. Warfield's work must have been done at virtual charity rates. Rudolph Greene recalls that once when he received a leg injury on his job with the telephone company, Dr. Warfield dressed his wound and treated him for thirty cents—and that included the cost of the bandage: oral interview, December 1986.

49. Perhaps because Vardell and Martin were summer people, they knew little of the women's work; it would be uncharitable to think they considered it unimportant, especially as Vardell's school, Flora MacDonald, considered one of its major functions to be the training of young women for the life of Christian service, whether at home or in the church.

50. Minutes of Stated Meeting of Concord Presbytery, September 1906, p. 195.

51. For the denomination's WOC activity and its attitude toward women generally in this era see Thompson, *Presbyterians*, III, 384-402: Southern Presbyterian women were slow to organize, compared to other Protestant groups in the United States, and they encountered some opposition from conservatives within the church; a denominational Women's Auxiliary can be dated to 1912. From 1922, the tenth anniversary of the organization, a "birthday gift" offering was authorized each year to be raised by the women for one of the church's many worthy causes at home or abroad. By 1959 "the total of 38 birthday gift offerings was in excess of three and a half million dollars. The abiding value of these gifts, for a wide variety of projects, often imaginatively conceived, is beyond estimation." *Ibid.*, p. 393.

52. "History of the Woman's Auxiliary of Blowing Rock Presbyterian Church," historical sketch to 1937 written by Mrs. H. F. Ingle; at Historical Foundation, Montreat. The WOC histories for RMPC, and other churches in the denomination, are an important local history source at the Foundation. A rare honor is to be chosen "Honorary Life Member" of the WOC; since its founding only eight have been so designated: Alma Robbins, Mary White, Sarah Payne, Ethel Burns, Alice Lentz, Mabel Holshouser, Merle Weakley, and Mary Smith. Information supplied by Mary Smith and Bernie Greene, November 1987.

53. So, too, were the barriers overcome between employer and employee: in the Cannons' employ for many years were Wade and Jeba Klutz, who came with them each summer to Blowing Rock; the couple participated actively at Rumble Church, frequently assisted Mrs. Cannon with her "scene-o-felt" lessons, and took part in all sorts of community activities. A close friend recalls that Wade Klutz had been hired by Joe Cannon to look after his wife and her

business affairs sometime in the early 1930's. Klutz, originally from near Salisbury, had been an automobile dealer in Charlotte when Cannon met him. The Klutzes accompanied the Cannons on their annual trips from Concord to Blowing Rock to Pass-a-grille, Florida, where they later had a winter home. Oral interview with Jo Greene, July 1987. See also "Mrs. Cannon's Work Long Remembered," *The Blowing Rocket*, special edition, p. 28.

54. Oral interview with church member Gladys Tester, daughter of L. D. and Martha Tester, December 1987.

55. Interview with Jo Greene, July 1987; as someone very close to the Cannon family—she practically raised Annie Cannon's grandson, Zack Tate—Jo Greene was in a position to hear many of the family stories which have been passed on about the Joseph Cannons. No record remains locally of the cost of the 1936 project.

56. RMPC Session Records, Book I, pp. 74-77. For the Browns: entries for December 1, 1935, and December 11, 1938, pp. 65, 101. Brown was elected deacon in April, 1936, serving until he was "reluctantly granted" his letter to the Jefferson church: *ibid.*, Register of Deacons.

57. Oral interview with Rudolph Greene, January 1987.

58. "1936 Church History," p. 4.

59. RMPC Session Records, Book I, p. 77.

60. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

62. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 60. After that summer R. A. Dunn wrote his "personal appreciations for the way the church provided religious worship for the colored servants during summer. Also a check [was] presented for church expenses to the amt of \$25.00. The clerk was ordered to acknowledge by letter the same." *Ibid.*, p. 63. For more on Dunn, see chapter five.

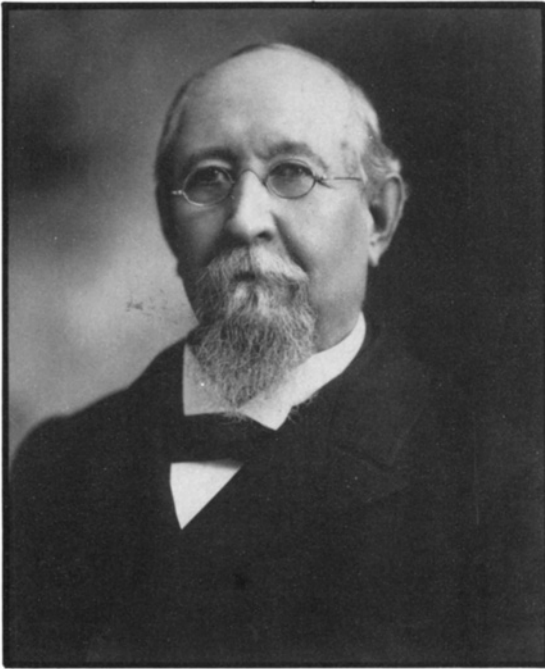
66. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-107.

67. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-114. *Ministerial Directory*, 1986 edition, and Neal, *Sacred Flame*, p. 78.

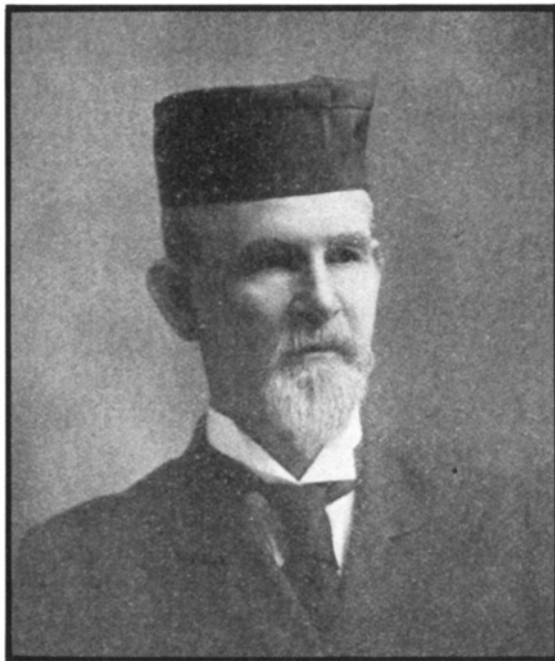
This page intentionally left blank



Main Street, Blowing Rock, in the 1890's. The first church structure is visible through the trees on the left in this, the only known photograph extant of it.



The Rev. Jethro Rumple, D. D.



The Rev. C. A. Munroe, pastor of the Lenoir Church and chairman of the home missions committee of Concord Presbytery. This picture must have been taken about the time he was active in the establishment of the Blowing Rock Church.



The Rev. Dr. James I. Vance, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Nashville, summered in Blowing Rock beginning about 1900, preaching often and powerfully at Rumble Church. His eloquence helped bring in the funds which made possible the building of the stone church and the congregation's support of Grandfather Home for some twenty years until his death in 1939.



The Rev. Dr. Charles G. Vardell, first president of Flora Macdonald College in Red Springs, labored energetically on the stone church building project along with his brother-in-law, Dr. William J. Martin. His fundraising abilities were extended for years on behalf of Tufts's work in Banner Elk.



Dr. William J. Martin, son of Col. William J. Martin of Davidson College. Dr. Martin, president of Davidson, 1912-1929, summered in Blowing Rock most of his life and designed the present stone sanctuary in 1905-6.



"The Drs. Sloop," Mary Martin and Eustace H., in the early 1950's. Their 1908 wedding may have been the first in the stone sanctuary, which had been designed by Mrs. Sloop's brother. They devoted their adult years to medical and educational work in Crossnore.

Blowing Rock, N.C.

July 16. 1902.

Mr. Geo. Allen Brown

My dear brother

Your kind and sympathizing letter was received and appreciated, and appreciated all the more because I know something of your own bereavements and troubles. It is seven years, I think, since you were called to part with your beloved wife, and I sympathized with you then. But you still had left a large family of sons & daughters to love, & to keep up your home life. That was a great comfort, and I am sure that you enjoy the companionship of your lovely daughters. I trust that God will hear your prayers for the conversion &

A letter in Dr. Rumple's hand, written from Blowing Rock to one of his Salisbury parishioners at the time of Rumple's wife's death. Photocopy of original at First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury, NC.

and good life of your sons.
My dear wife was shared with
me for forty five years, and
thank God for her, and for all
that she was to me and to
my life work. She loved her Sa-
vior, and her Bible, and her
Church, and our people. I thank
God for the blessed assurance,
that she has entered into a
much needed rest. I did not ex-
pect her to be taken so soon,
but I am thankful that she
passed away so painlessly. I
should have loved to hear some
last words from her, but I do
not need them.

God's grace is sufficient for me.
I hope to return when vacation is
over, and see you all again.
May God bless you & yours.

Your afflicted Pastor & friend
J. Rumble



Rose Young McDade, sister of Hattie Young Brown, poses beside the rock church, about 1922, when she was twenty-two, and an organizer and teacher of Children's Day programs at Rumble Church. Reproduced from a postcard; the church was a popular backdrop for photographs for many years. Courtesy of Mrs. Brown.



Skyland Inn

*Here's a house founded on a rock,
Forming a terrace overlooking The View,
Where lovely vista is visualized,
And Dreamland seems to be true.*

*The grounds are just as they were created,
With rocks of peculiar forms,
Rhodendron and azaleas in gorgeous splendor,
And trees that have braved many storms.*

A page from a pamphlet on Blowing Rock, published in the mid-1920's. Mrs. Emma R. Stewart, who first promoted the cause of building the church, ran the Skyland Inn for many years. Much altered, it is today the Farm House Restaurant. Pamphlet (cover is missing) from the Vardell-McNett family records, courtesy of Linda M. Yarnell.



On the steps of the Vardell family summer residence, on Chestnut Hill, Blowing Rock, summer 1926: a photograph remarkable for its many Presbyterians. Back row: Jennie Rumple Martin, Dr. William J. Martin, Edward H. Williamson, Dr. Alexander Sprunt II, Katherine Vardell Williamson, Mrs. Alexander Sprunt II, Charles G. Vardell holding Libby V. McNett, Linda Lee Rumple Vardell, Ruth Vardell Gage; center row: James Murray, Elizabeth Vardell McNett, Charles Gildersleeve Vardell, Kitty Martin, Kitty Williamson, Vardell Williamson, Mary Linda Vardell (later Mrs. Ellison Smyth); front: Jane Dickson Vardell Murray, Eleanor Vardell Sprunt holding "Margita" Vardell, Edwin Holt Williamson, Eloise Martin Currie, Margaret Vardell Sprunt, Dr. Armand L. Currie, Alexander Sprunt III. Dog is unidentified! Photo courtesy of Linda McNett Yarnell, with additional identifications provided by Mary Linda Vardell Smyth.

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
of the
Blowing Rock
Presbyterian Church

BLOWING ROCK, N. C.

Rev. G. S. Buchanan, Pastor

"The Friendly Church of Love and Service."

July 26, 1886---July 26, 1936

Church Directory

The Session

Rev. G. Sexton Buchanan, Moderator

E. G. Underdown

Howard Klutz

J. E. Holshouser

Joe White

W. L. Holshouser, Clerk

The Board of Deacons

H. C. Hayes

J. Clark Brown

H. P. Holshouser, Secretary and Treasurer

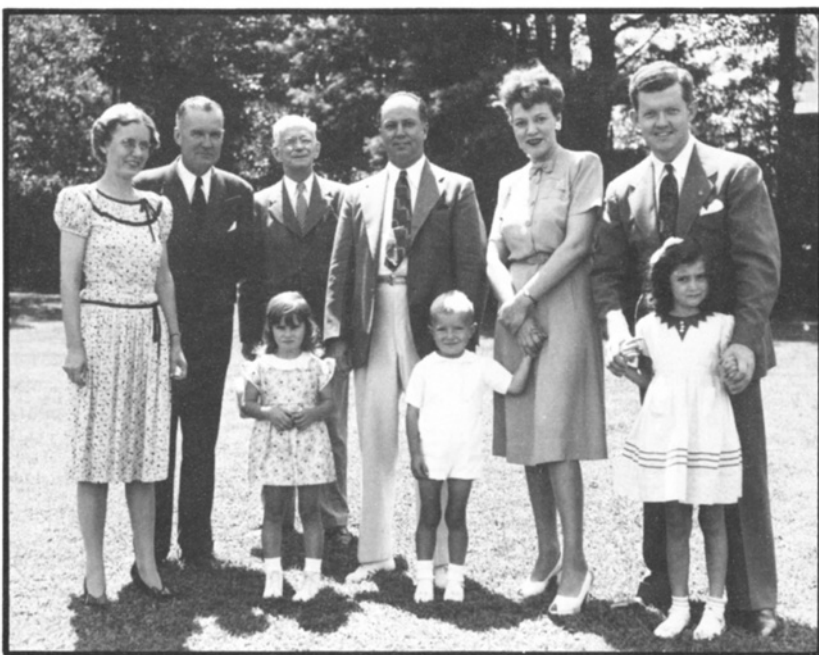
J. E. Holshouser, Director of Church School

Mrs. Don Johnson, President of Woman's Auxiliary

Miss Lois Klutz, President of Y. P. Society



Mr. and Mrs. L. Dow Tester, in their yard, taken about 1940. Both were very active church members in that era. Photo by Emerson Humphrey, courtesy of their daughter, Gladys Tester.



A Grandfather Home Day during World War II. In *The Blowing Rocket* the original caption read, "Sparkplugs of the Grandfather Home Day celebration at Blowing Rock. Left to right: Miss Anne Bryan, superintendent of the Orphanage, Rev. Dr. Walter K. Keys, pastor of the Rumple Memorial Presbyterian Church where special service was held, Dr. W. T. Tate, president of Edgar Tufts Memorial Association, and the three nationally-known artists who appeared at the service, Stuart Ross, pianist, Jean Watson, contralto, and Mac Morgan, baritone. The youngsters in front are three happy orphans from the Home."



David Ovens, Charlotte merchant and Blowing Rock summer resident, sponsor of the Grandfather Home benefit concerts from 1940 to his death in 1957; from a portrait by A. P. Fox.



R. A. Dunn, Charlotte banker and Blowing Rock summer resident; his endowment for the youth of Blowing Rock still supports Christian activities through the church. Photocopied from a frontispiece to a pamphlet he prepared in 1932 on the history of Charlotte's First Presbyterian Church; copy at the Presbyterian Archives, Montreat.



Interior of the stone sanctuary, decorated for Christmas, 1945. Note the absence of overhead lighting. The heavy exterior door, to the left in the picture, has been replaced with an interior one since the addition of the Cannon education building.



Bob Hardin holds the bank note as Howard Holshouser strikes the flame, on the lawn of the manse, 1962; Bob Snyder looks on in the foreground. A hard-working congregation made this scene possible. Second row, l. to r.: Collis Greene, Bruce Greene, Lewis Lentz, Cecil Rhodes, Clyde Dula, Wade Klutz, Tom Wright; third row, l. to r.: Jay Greene, Gene Craig, Rudolph Greene, the Rev. Blake Brinkerhoff, John Lyons.



Sunday school officers, teachers, and pupils in the winter chapel, about 1962 (before the late 1960's renovations). Standing, l. to r.: Everette Widener, Lewis Lentz, Annie L. Cannon, Geba Klutz, Virginia Bolick, Mabel Holshouser, Nell Greene, Bernie Greene, Jean Bolick, Cecil Rhodes, Recie Craig, Rebecca Rhodes, Shirley Lentz, Mary Shore, Vada Widener, Sarah Payne, Maude Childs.



Mrs. Maud Ingle, first president of Rumble Memorial's Women of the Church organization.



Mrs. Joseph C. (Annie Ludow) Cannon, who over the years was Rumble Church's largest single benefactor. Her "scene-o-felt" Bible Classes were widely attended and loved by Blowing Rock children from the 1940's to the early 1960's. Photo taken about 1962.



Building the Cannon education wing, 1969. This photo shows the original dimensions of the 1936 chapel building, and the covered connecting passage to the stone church. It ran in *The Blowing Rocket* that summer with the caption, "Dreams Come True."

Rumple Memorial . . .

"Rumple Memorial . . . Through The Years": These drawings and photos were assembled about 1980 for the first Rumple Church Pictorial Directory. (1) Artist Jerry Miller's sketch, dating from about 1980, was used on note paper and on Sunday bulletins in recent years. (2) The original porch on the stone church, before the 1928-29 remodeling; comparison with later photos shows that the remodeling was extensive. (3) A fuller view of the original stone church, issued as a hand-colored postcard during the Tufts era. Barely visible at the left are a few gravestones. (4) The church in the 1930's, showing a corner of the first manse, later used as a fellowship



1



2



3

Through The Years

building, and a street sign erected at the Rev. Keys's urging. (5) In the 1940's, the church displayed a new sign, and the spruce tree, once a shrub, dominated the south entry. (6) By the late 1950's, a still more elaborate sign had been erected; the spruce tree had overgrown the entry. (7) Shortly after the Cannon Educational Building, visible at the left of the photo, was completed in 1970, the spruce was cut down. (8) The architects' 1969 drawing of the proposed educational building has a minor inaccuracy: it shows more of the winter chapel than was actually incorporated in the new structure.



4



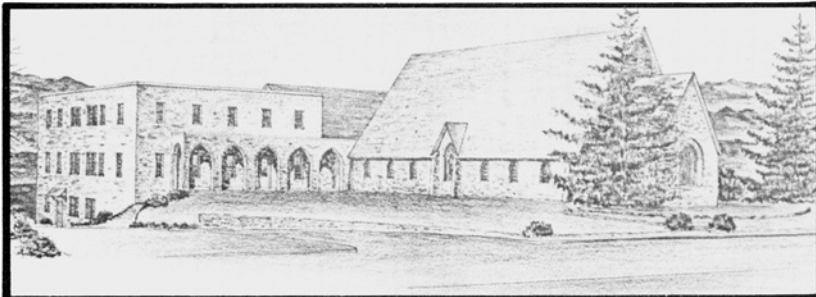
5



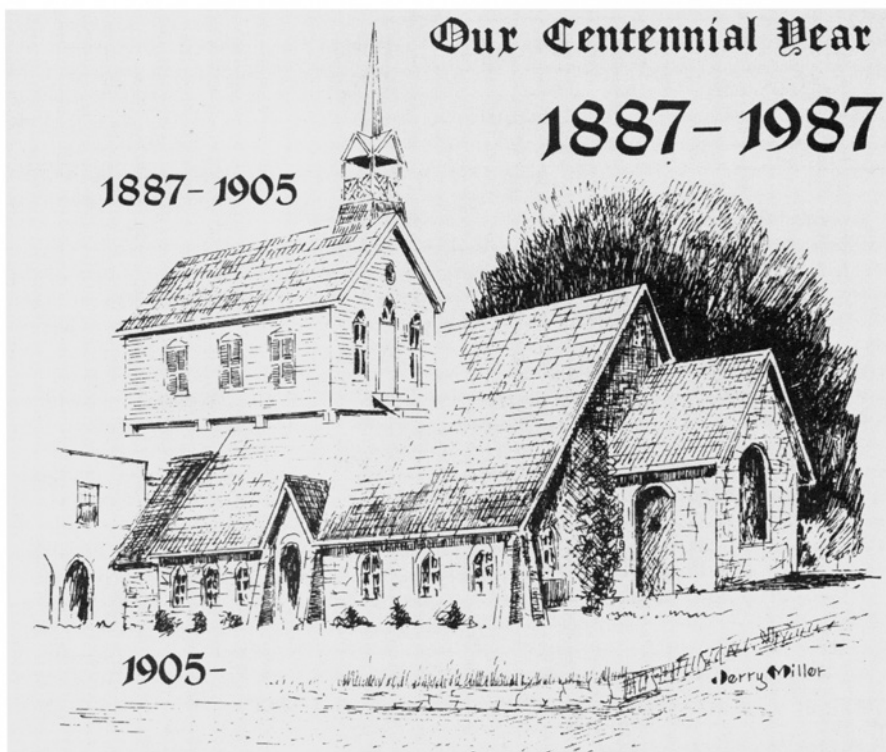
6



7



8



(Organized 1887)

To all who are weary and need rest; to all who are lonely and desire companionship; to all who mourn and want comfort; to all who sin and need a savior; and to whosoever will come, this church opens its doors.

Rumple Memorial Presbyterian Church

Blowing Rock, N.C.

Vaughn Earl Hartsell
Minister

Church School
9:45 AM

Morning Worship
11:00 AM

Church Phone
704-295-7675

THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD
RUMPLE SUNDAY
(The First Of Our Centennial Celebrations)
JUNE 14, 1987.

LET THE PEOPLE ENGAGE IN SILENT MEDITATION AND PRAYER UPON
ENTERING THE SANCTUARY

Organ Prelude: "Prelude in A Major"....Johann Sebastian Bach

Choral Introit and Ringing of the Bell:

"There Is A Welcome in This Church For Thee".....Noël C. Lovelace
(Composed for this Centennial Celebration)

There is a welcome in this church for Thee;
Come in and rest, and think, and kneel and pray;
What man hath builded for God's glory see!
Give thanks, and so in peace, go on thy way.

+ + Processional Hymn #437:... "The Church's One Foundation"

The Order of the Procession:

Clark Gray: Seal of the former United Presbyterian Church
Will Howard: Seal of the former Presbyterian Church, U.S.
Jeff Lowe: Seal of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Paige Hartsell: Banner of the Presbytery of Concord
Dr. Donald B. Saunders: The Davidson College Flag
Mary S. Smith: Session Book and greetings from the Governor
Robert B. Lowe: Original Pulpit Bible Given in 1887
The Rev. Mr. Vaughn Earl Hartsell, Minister, Rumble Memorial
The Rev. Dr. L. B. Gibbs, former Executive Secretary, Presbytery of Holston
The Honorable James E. Holshouser, Jr. (Governor of N.C. 1973-77)
The Rev. Dr. John W. Kuykendall, president of Davidson College

Invocation and Lord's Prayer.....Mr. Hartsell

Ritual of Fellowship

(IN ORDER TO COME TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER BETTER, YOU ARE ASKED TO SIGN THE REGISTRY PAD ON
THE PEW AND PASS IT TO THOSE SITTING NEXT TO YOU.)

Welcome, Announcements and Recognition of Guests

Greetings from the Hon. James G. Martin, Governor of N.C.

Read by Clerk of Session, Mary S. Smith

AN ACROSTIC LITANY ON THE NAME JETHRO

**By The Rev. Lawton W. Posey, (Davidson, Class of 1957), Minister of the
Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, Charleston, West Virginia.**

GOVERNOR HOLSHOUSER: Judgement and spiritual discernment were your gifts to your servant Jethro Rumble. We praise you for his manifestation of these gifts as presbyter, preacher and teacher, as builder of churches, as a leader in ministry and as the founder of this church which proudly bears his name.

THE PEOPLE: For Your servant JETHRO we give you thanks.

GOVERNOR HOLSHOUSER: Education and edification were twin goals of Dr. Rumble, as he sought to reveal the riches of Scriptural knowledge and Divine grace to the congregations built up under his care. We thank you for his unveiling of the riches of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for all people in his care.

THE PEOPLE: For Your servant JETHRO, we give you thanks.

GOVERNOR HOLSHOUSER: Trust in Your providential mercy enabled Your servant Jethro to proclaim the unfailing riches of Your Son Jesus Christ, in spite of the tragic loss of his two sons and the passing of his life's companion Jennie. We honor You, Lord for You planted in his heart the virtue of trust and the light of faith.

THE PEOPLE: For Your servant JETHRO, we give you thanks.

GOVERNOR HOLSHOUSER: Holiness of life and purity of doctrine were guarded zealously by Jethro Rumble. In season and out of season he spoke of Your unfailing mercy. By life and example he modeled the life of faith for his flock. For his sincerity and zeal we render our thanksgiving.

THE PEOPLE: For your servant JETHRO, we give you thanks.

GOVERNOR HOLSHOUSER: Regard for the coming generations inspired him to establish a home for orphans and to care for their concerns in Barium Springs, to serve the interests of Davidson College and to further the cause of Union Seminary in Virginia. For his concern and care, we give glory to you.

THE PEOPLE: For your servant JETHRO, we give you thanks.

GOVERNOR HOLSHOUSER: Overcoming in faith even when old in years, You blessed him with the desire to see the church prosper under the direction of new and younger leadership. Your servant Jethro Rumble worked until the end of his long life to further the work of the church in North Carolina and the spread of the Gospel to the far parts of the earth. For this, we gather to glorify and enjoy You.

THE PEOPLE: For your servant JETHRO we give you thanks.

GOVERNOR HOLSHOUSER: Today, we are gathered in this church which bears his name to give honor, not to JETHRO but to You his Creator and Sustainer. Yet, we remember that we follow in the steps of this revered minister of the Gospel. We seek also to be given the faith which guided Dr. Rumple during his earthly pilgrimage, so that when the Book of Life is opened to our place of record, we may not be found missing but with our names written there for eternity, to the glory and praise of Your Name.

AMEN.

++Affirmation of Faith and Gloria Patri

Old Testament Reading: Joshua 4:1-3; 15-24Mr. Lowe

++Hymn #379:..... "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

Pastoral Prayer.....Dr. Gibbs

Prayer Response "Hear Thou Our Prayer, O Lord" N. Lovelace

Composed for Vaughn Earl Hartsell and the
Rumple Memorial Presbyterian Church Choir

Hear Thou our prayer, O Lord,
And write these things on our hearts, we pray Thee;
That in our daily living we may serve Thee rightly. Amen.

Offering and Offertory Anthem: (Choir and Congregation)

"Rejoice with Heart and Voice"Austin C. Lovelace

Rejoice with heart and voice in God, the Three-in-One,
In whom this work of faith was gloriously begun.
And now, at last The desert passed,
Our hopes renewed we travel on.

How well our founders planned! What vigor! What restraint!
Granite and sandstone blend Like toughness in a Saint.
How firm their faith in life and death:
Or did they also tire and faint?

The world they knew is gone: Only their church survives
To point the way to heav'n, And redirect our lives.
A new world claims New skills, new aims,
And Christlike love that seeks and saves.

Today within these walls we offer praise and prayer;
And from each other learn How much in Christ we share;
And strive to prove By how we live
Where there is need, his Church is there.

(The congregation standing)

Choir and Congregation:

THE COLLECT: Almighty God, who has promised to your children of faith, a holy city eternal in the heavens: Grant us the faith to live as those who know they are sojourners, whose homeland is not of this world, that you may not be ashamed to be called our God. We pray in the name of Jesus, your Son. Amen.

WELCOME: We extend a cordial welcome to all who may be visiting with us this morning. It is a pleasure to have you with us and we invite you to come back and worship with us again. All persons present are invited to the catered lunch being served in the R. A. Dunn Fellowship Hall immediately after the service this morning. There is no "set" charge for the meal, but donations to defray the cost of the meal will be gladly accepted.

1987 MARKS THE CENTENNIAL YEAR for Rumple Memorial Presbyterian Church, which was organized by the Presbytery of Concord on July 17, 1887. (Dr. Rumple had preached the dedicatory sermon for the first building on the fourth Sunday of July, 1886.) Our Centennial Celebrations will be spread out over the months of June, July and August. Today's "RUMPLE SUNDAY" (the first of many celebrations) gives us the opportunity to pay tribute to one of the guiding lights in the founding of this church--The Rev. Dr. Jethro Rumple, for whom this church was named and also to honor and remember and celebrate the contributions made to this church through its relationships with Davidson College and its many graduates who have made significant contributions over the years to the growth and development of this congregation.

ALL DAVIDSON GRADUATES AND STUDENTS are requested to gather outside in front of the church, immediately after the service, for a group picture with Dr. Kuykendall which will be used in the next issue of THE DAVIDSON UPDATE.

COPIES OF THE PICTORIAL DIRECTORIES may be secured after the service from Tom Bouvier who is manning a table on the church lawn. All families who had their picture taken are entitled to one copy free. Cost to others is \$5.00.

THE SEALS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES (UPCUSA; PCUS and PCUSA) carried in the processional were painted by Debra H. Hartsell from Spartanburg, S.C. and sister-in-law of Mr. Hartsell.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROCESSIONAL AND ORDER OF SERVICE were drawn from a representative group of our congregation: members of families who have been active in this church for generations, people who have moved here from other places and summer residents-- all of whom make important contributions to the work and worship of this congregation.

THE RUMPLE SUNDAY OFFERING, to be used to underwrite the cost of the Centennial Celebrations spread out over the months of June, July and August, will be received along with the regular offering this morning. If you would like to participate, please use the envelopes in the pews marked: "Rumple Sunday", and place them in the offering plates when they are passed. Our goal is \$3,000. Thank you.

AMY MAST OFF TO NICARAGUA (June 20-July 26) on Presbyterian Peacemaking Center's Work-Study internship program, but she needs \$1,000. If you would like to help (*any amount*) make out your check to RMPC and we will see that Amy gets it. Amy is the cousin of Judy and Jerry Burns.

DON SAUNDER'S HISTORY OF RUMPLE MEMORIAL; FOR HIS CAUSE A LITTLE HOUSE, will be published in January 1988 by the Appalachian Consortium Press. A replica of that book's cover (with cover photo by William Bake) is reproduced on the flier in your bulletin this morning. Please use the "tear-off" on the back of the flier to pre-order copies of Dr. Saunder's book.

MANY, THANKS TO ALL THE PEOPLE who brought together their creative efforts in order for us to enjoy this Centennial Event. Special thanks to the Centennial Committee: George Kinnard, Chairman, Betty Blume, Michele Bouvier, Jerry Burns, Dee Gray and Rudolph Greene.

THE CHURCH DIRECTORY

Vaughn Earl Hartsell, Minister	295-7435
Mary Smith, Clerk of Session	295-7259
Marion Lovelace, Organist	264-7264
Noel Lovelace, Music Director	264-7264
Bernie Greene, Superintendent of Sunday School	295-7177
Sarah Spann, President of the Women of the Church	295-3876
Glenda Howard, Chmn., Circle #1	295-3311
Dot Lentz, Chmn., Circle #2	295-7177
Libba Boyd, Chmn. Circle #3	295-7017
David Wray, Receiving Treasurer	295-7202
Bill Burke, Disbursing Treasurer	295-3938
Thurman Price, Sexton	262-3793

Henry Neely, Summer Residents Chairman

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Men's Class, Jim O'Dell, President	295-7156
Women's Class, Mrs. Charles F. Brown	295-7875
Couple's Class, Bill Chater, Teacher	295-7245
(Grades 6-12), Ellie Thomas	295-7307
(Grades 1-5, Joan Chater, Teacher	295-7245
Kindergarten, Nursery Dot Lentz, Teacher	295-7177
Cindy Rice, Teacher	264-4882
The Dunn Youth, Myra Shore, Advisor	295-7259
Good News Nursery, Debbie Lindenmuth, Teacher	295-3318
(Meets Monday, Wednesday & Friday 8:30-11:30 here at the church)	
Centennial Committee <i>George Kinnard, Chmn.</i> , Michele Bouvier, Betty Blume, Tom Bouvier, Jerry Burns, Randolph Greene	

THE SESSION

(Meets The Second Sunday of Each Month At 7:00 PM)

Vaughn Earl Hartsell, Moderator Mary Smith, Clerk

CLASS OF 1987

Jean Clawson
Johnny Lentz
Bob Lowe

CLASS OF 1988

Bill Howard
George Kinnard
Mary Smith

CLASS OF 1989

Rachel Rose
Ellie Thomas
David Wray

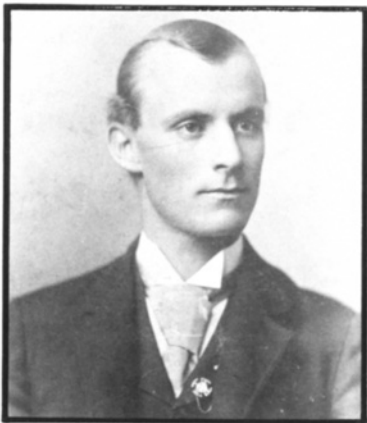
Howard P. Holshouser, Sr., Elder Emeritus

COMMITTEES OF THE SESSION

Education	Ellie Thomas & Bill Howard
Finance	Bob Lowe and David Wray
Liason for Historical Committee	Jean Clawson
Properties	Johnny Lentz and George Kinnard
Pastoral Care	Jean Clawson and Rachel Rose
Worship	Rachel Rose and Mary Smith

This church was organized by the Presbytery of Concord in 1887 and takes its name from the Rev. Dr. Jethro Rumple, long-time minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury, NC (1860-1906). Dr. Rumple, along with the Rev. Dr. Charles G. Vardell and Colonel W.J. Martin, summered here and at their urging the Presbytery of Concord organized this church. Dr. William Joseph Martin, Jr. (son of Colonel W.J. Martin) designed the stone sanctuary and was the 11th President of Davidson College (1912-1929). This church is a member of the Presbytery of Concord, the Synod of North Carolina and the Presbyterian Church (USA).





The Rev. Edgar Tufts,
1897-1923
(photo courtesy of M. T. Neal)



The Rev. W. R. Smith, interim,
1929-1930



The Rev. G. S. Buchanan,
1931-1939



The Rev. W. K. Keys,
1940-1948, 1956-1960



The Rev. R. D. Earnest,
1948-1950



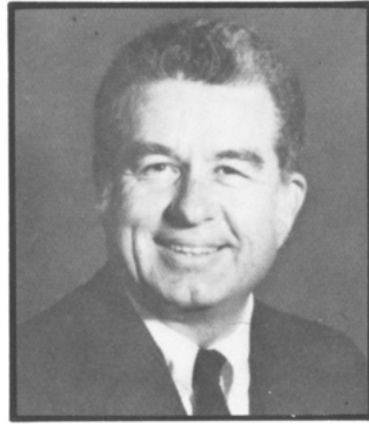
The Rev. S. Cappel,
1950-1951



The Rev. L. T. Newland,
1951-1956



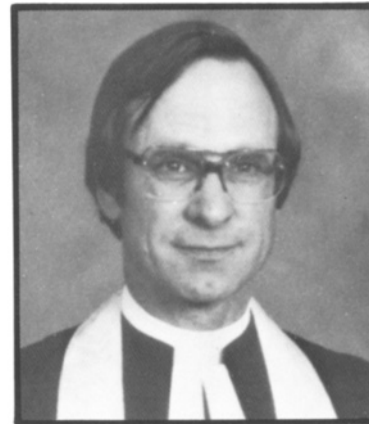
The Rev. A. B. Brinkerhoff,
1960-1965



The Rev. J. R. Holshouser,
1965-1973



The Rev. F. C. Collier,
1973-1978



The Rev. V. E. Hartsell,
1980-



On "Rumple Sunday," June 14, 1987, all persons in the congregation with connections to Davidson College were asked to pose with the minister; the college was celebrating its own sesquicentennial in 1987. First row, l. to r.: The Rev. Vaughn Earl Hartsell, minister of Rumple Memorial; Rand Hartsell, his son, '86; William L. Holshouser of Banner Elk, '33; Mariam Cannon Hayes, member of Board of Trustees; William C. Cannon, Jr., '36; The Rev. L. C. Gibbs, '25; Jane Campbell, '87; Rupert Barber, professor of theater and coordinator of the college's sesquicentennial celebration; Jay May, '70, director of alumni affairs. Second row, l. to r.: The Rev. Dr. John W. Kuykendall, '59, president of the college; the Hon. James E. Holshouser, Jr., '56, former governor of North Carolina; Allen Mast, '86, his nephew; Allen Compton, '88; Charles Fleming, '50, college director of personnel and administrative services; Rutledge Miller, MD, '39; Dr. Donald B. Saunders, '62; Prof. Emeritus and College Archivist Chalmers G. Davidson, '28.

Rumple Goes to War, 1940–1956

BY 1940, THE YEAR Keys was called to Blowing Rock, war clouds loomed over the United States; Europe and Asia were already ablaze. Presbyterian missions abroad had been seriously disrupted. Two foreign missionaries whose work was cut short would later minister at or near Rumple Church: Leroy T. Newland and Thompson B. Southall, Jr. Both men had served in Korea. Dr. Newland spent nearly thirty years there, from 1911 to 1940; Southall returned from three years' service in 1941. Newland took the reins at Rumple later during the 1950's, while Southall was called to the Banner Elk Church upon his arrival back in the United States and served there until 1946. He was among several guest speakers at Rumple during the summer of 1941. It was also Southall's duty to lead the funeral service for Edgar H. Tufts, who died in June 1942 at the age of 42, and was buried alongside his father near the Banner Elk church.¹

In many other ways, too, the World War II era affected the life of the larger church. Holston Presbytery had reported a decline in support for home missions between 1929 and 1941: the number of workers in the field had dropped from fifty to seventeen. "In the same period of time our income from Presbytery's Home Missions has decreased almost one half, and our work has increased about one third." But the home missions committee reported by 1941 that "more interest has been [shown] in assuming more of the financial responsibility and in local improvements" in the churches.² Churches were temporarily less mission-oriented and more attentive to needs at home. The war was soon to bring increases in chaplaincies and in "camp" work at military bases. One who served as chaplain, and later bought a summer home in Blowing Rock and often preached in Rumple's pulpit, was the Rev. Charles Lynnwood Brown, a 1937 Davidson College graduate who fin-

ished his degree at Union Seminary just as the war began. He saw duty with the 82nd Airborne Division from 1942 to 1946.

Rumple Church conformed in several ways to the denomination's pattern of experiences during these years. Keys came as its first pastor fully supported by the local congregation, and beneficiary of the recently completed education building. Yet his own family's lives, and those of many in his congregation, were soon to be troubled by the events abroad. Relatively little in the wartime session records reflects the losses and uncertainties the fellowship suffered through this period. To all appearances the church went from success to success. The membership numbers continued to climb, as did Sunday school enrollments and the number of infant baptisms. Blowing Rock's "baby boom" started early: the term is usually given only the generation of children born after World War II. More adults than children still were baptized during the war, however.

And while gasoline was rationed and construction work on the Blue Ridge Parkway was suspended, summer people did not stop crowding into town; the session minutes for September 1942 claimed the summer had seen "the largest crowds and the largest offering in the church's history." The annual August services all through the war achieved ever higher levels of support for Grandfather Home. In August 1940 the first special Sunday service of sacred music was held, arranged by David Ovens of Charlotte; it featured the Charlotte Festival Singers, an eight-person group accompanied by Margaret Vance and two others. The next year Ovens brought "Miss Agnes David and Mr. Benny DeLoache of New York, Mr. Norman Cordon of Linville and New York, and the special Quartet made up of outstanding North Carolina singers." The performers had first sung in Banner Elk, to celebrate the opening at the Home of a new administration building, made possible by a gift from the Joseph Cannons. When they also successfully appeared at Blowing Rock, a tradition was begun which lasted more than twenty-five years. Beginning after 1945, the sacred music concerts became linked to the annual Grandfather Home offering at Rumple Church; but for the war years they were held to augment the church's own receipts, at "Home Church Day" services.³

Yet the records do show that periodically the war's turmoil on distant shores touched the small mountaintop community. In August 1942, Mr. and Mrs. Wade Klutz, longtime employees of the Joseph Cannons, transferred their memberships to Rumple Church, as did their son, Sgt. John Allen Klutz. He is the first individual of military rank to be mentioned as joining the church; his brother Jacob, also a member of the armed forces, joined two years later. Other young men

would soon be called up for duty: they and often others in their families joined the church in which they had grown up, anticipating the separation and danger the war would bring. Among these were the young Lentz cousins, Perry and William Lewis, and Lewis's sisters, Recie and Nancy.

During the war years, too, the church had an unusually large number of transfers of membership, both of departing and arriving people. In 1943, "It was unanimously ordered that the annual Every Member Canvass be made by letter inasmuch as such a large percentage of the membership are away from home." Among the many arrivals of the period were Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Brown and several members of their family; among the departures, Mr. and Mrs. William Holshouser, Jr., dismissed to the Church of the Pilgrims, in Washington, D.C. Some sort of record must have been set by Mrs. Lyles Harris when she joined the church: "inasmuch as her present membership is in the Church of England in the British Isles, she was received on statement of her continuing faith and her desire to bring her membership here. She was received into full communion and fellowship of the church" in March 1944.⁴

Also in 1944, the session voted special sums to presbytery on behalf of "Defense Service" and the Home Mission Emergency Fund. That same year requests came in on behalf of three service members overseas to be enrolled in the church: Jule Welch Tate, Cecil Ray Critcher, and Grover Clifford Walters. By the time the request from Tate's chaplain to this effect had arrived, Tate was dead; he had lost his life in the Mediterranean theater. "By unanimous consent he was enrolled posthumously on the rolls of the church. The other two candidates . . . were received . . . pending the ordinance of baptism." When hostilities ended, both these men did indeed receive baptism and took their places in the Rumple congregation. Another new member was serviceman James M. Critcher. Others who joined had seen their lives forever touched by the war: among these during 1945 were Pauline Castle Stone, and her daughter, Donna, who joined the fellowship and were baptized. "Mrs. Stone's husband, Sgt. Harold Stone, was killed while on a bombing flight over Germany."⁵

During these years the session periodically voted Keys a few extra dollars to cover postage expenses: he sent out monthly newsletters from the church to every service member from Blowing Rock, whatever his denomination and however remote his duty station. Many of the war's survivors came back remembering this kindness and the link Keys had provided to loved ones back home. Some have saved these bulletins to this day.⁶ The pastor filled them with trivia about Blowing

Rock's erratic weather, results of ball games at the high school, news of weddings and of the boys who had returned home on leave, his own success at the local fishing streams; he also gave assurance that all service members were being remembered in prayer by folks at the church. He sent on the addresses of all who served and whatever news he had received from them, so that a network of information tied them together around the globe. Keys's own two sons, Bill and Tommy, saw active duty, as did his daughter Julia's husband, Blowing Rock native Bill Williams; "her 'Pa'" had married them in March, 1944, he proudly told the boys at Easter of that year.⁷

Perhaps as a way of keeping his mind off the dangers his own loved ones were facing, Keys threw himself into many civic and community affairs. When the mathematics teacher at the high school was called into the Navy, the pastor, a former teacher himself, pinch hit for him. He served on the Watauga County War Ration Board. He pushed hard for the creation of a town park; in 1944 he reported to the servicemen that a special referendum had been called to vote on

a bond issue to purchase the Coffey property [site of the old Watauga Hotel] for the establishment of a Memorial Recreation Park in honor of all you folks to whom this letter is being written. There is some opposition but we think it will be approved. We know that you would rather have such a park, equipped for bowling, swimming, tennis, shuffle-board, boating and many other sports than to have a marble shaft reaching to the skies erected on Main Street.

Keys was surely right, even if his vision for the park proved to be bigger than its realization. The park would not be finished until 1950, but it is in many ways a legacy of Keys's energy, the love he felt for his adopted home, and his dedication to a parish which for the war years, at least, was worldwide.⁸

The church continued to observe its "usual summer program," which for Keys as for his predecessors meant, besides Grandfather Home Sunday, the frequent appearance of outside preachers. By the early 1940's, though, many of the pulpit veterans who had often assisted in days past were gone. James I. Vance died in Blowing Rock on November 24, 1939, at the age of seventy-seven; his body was returned to Nashville for burial. According to a tribute in the *Christian Observer*, Vance "had an understanding with his church [in Nashville] that he would spend a portion of each year in evangelistic work. And this he did as long as he was physically able. It is significant to note that his physical collapse came during one of these meetings."⁹ During Vance's

final summer in the mountains, he asked to preach at a tiny Baptist church in the Mulberry community not far from Blowing Rock, because he wanted a last chance to speak from a small country pulpit of the sort in which he had first begun his ministry.¹⁰ Ever a man of peace, Vance was deeply grieved at the outbreak of another world war. One of his last responsibilities to the Presbyterian Church, U. S., was to represent it once again on a Permanent Committee of Protestant Relief in Europe, just as he had after the First War. His daughter, Margaret, was treasurer of this committee.¹¹ After his death, Margaret Vance and her mother moved more or less permanently to Blowing Rock, where the preacher's widow died in December of 1945. For another twenty-eight years "Miss Margaret" played the organ at Rumple Church, and took an active community role. No longer just a summer resident, she had become a "transplant." So another generation of the Vance family continued to support the work of the church. In 1940, members of Vance's family and others contributed a stained-glass window, depicting Christ the Good Shepherd, to Rumple Church in Vance's memory.

Then in September, 1943, Dr. William J. Martin died, at age seventy-five, and was buried beside his parents in the old Davidson College cemetery. He had spent most of his retirement years in Davidson after leaving the presidency of the General Assembly's Training School in 1933.¹² To Martin, at the time he retired from the presidency of the college in 1929, Vance had written a letter of tribute recalling their joint labors at Blowing Rock:¹³

We have tramped and camped together. We have slept by the streams and on the mountaintops. We have been thrown into the most intimate relationships with each other. We have looked down on God's great acres from the roof of the world, and we have toiled side by side to build for Him and for His cause a little house where we both have spent many a Sunday in the worship of a Divinity that is real. Through all this, I have learned to love you as a brother, and my wishes now for you and yours are only such as come from a friend.

It had been both men's unshakable faith that they would one day "look down on God's great acres" from a still higher vantage point; now their friendship had been renewed in the presence of their Lord.

Another who joined "the church at rest" during these years was elder and clerk of session William L. Holshouser. A tribute *In Memoriam* appeared in the church bulletin after his death:

In the passing of Mr. W. L. Holshouser each of us as individuals and our church as an organization has lost a great and true friend. For fifty years he was a merchant in Blowing Rock and a friend to all who were in need. For thirty years he was an elder in our church and deeply interested in its welfare. Only in the records of heaven could one discover all the good deeds of his life; for he was not disposed to publish them to the world. Faithful, honest, kind, just, devoted to his family, his friends, and his church, he was in the rarest and truest sense a GOOD MAN—a man after God's own heart. His going away has left a vacant pew in our church . . . and a vacant place in our hearts that only God can fill. . . .¹⁴

The old enemy which was causing so much loss around the world had also claimed three of Rumble church's faithful "founding fathers."

But coming out of the world's trial would be a new generation who over the next years would help to fill the gap with renewed energy and vigor. During Keys's first pastorate new additions were made to the session who served the church for several years—although their terms of service could not match those of the original members. L. D. Tester was elected elder in 1941; Howard P. Holshouser and Richard Oxentine were added in 1943; and John P. Lyon, a new resident who, with his wife, had transferred their membership from the Presbyterian church at Burnsville, was elected in 1946. The diaconate, too, was increased: Collis Greene was added in 1941, Dan Klutz, Jesse Burns, Cameron Williams, and Bill Williams in 1943, and in 1946 four returning veterans: William Keys, Robert Hardin, Howard Holshouser, Jr., and Clarence Berryman. Within a short time, all these men were at work on new church projects. During 1945 "extensive improvements were made on the manse." The next year much work went into the church grounds, and a new concrete floor was laid in the stone church. A permanent committee on maintenance was established to make repairs, beginning with the slate roof, in 1946. In 1947 that committee made still another attempt to provide adequate heat to the sanctuary: the Sunday school was asked to help raise \$375 for a new oil burner. In short, the church seemed increasingly supplied with workers and with enthusiasm as it faced the postwar age. The end of the war also brought the summer visitors back in full force. For a time it must have seemed that "business as usual" had been resumed in the life of the summer community. When in September 1946 former pastor G. S.

Buchanan was invited to preach at "Rally Day" services, he must have been encouraged by the progress at his old charge.¹⁵

But all was not well with pastor Keys. In 1946 his alma mater, King College, recognized him for his mountain mission work with the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree. But the pressure of his responsibilities had for a second time strained his nerves and sapped his strength. Already by spring, 1947, his "continued illness" was of concern to the session. At a meeting in May moderated by the Rev. Roswell Long, president of Lees-McRae College, it voted to send a call to the Rev. David Baker "to serve as supply pastor for the summer months . . . during which time the regular salary shall be paid to Dr. Keys."¹⁶

Keys was back that fall to lead a session meeting which voted to receive by letter Margaret Vance, Sarah Payne of Charlotte, and Mr. and Mrs. John C. Thompson of Coral Gables, Florida, into the fellowship of the church. But in January, 1948, at a joint meeting of elders and deacons, Keys asked for a leave of absence: his physicians had advised him to spend "the hard part of the winter in Florida." He offered to return in March to "hold services and help prepare the reports for the church year" and to resign effective March 31. The session, believing that "the church is urgently in need of immediate active leadership," felt the congregation could not wait. It accepted his resignation effective March 31, 1948, "or earlier if a new pastor is secured," and conditioned his leave of absence "on the understanding that salary payments will be made only insofar as the church finances will permit and subject to approval by church officers."¹⁷

A pulpit supply and pastoral committee, consisting of Howard Holsouser, John P. Lyon, L. D. Tester, and Joe White, elders, and deacon Bob Hardin, secured various visiting ministers, including on at least one occasion the Rev. Buchanan. On February 15, a letter from Keys was read to a congregational meeting, in which he recalled the "delightful and happy associations" he had had with Rumple Church and thanked God for His "evident approval of what has been accomplished insofar as the increase in membership and in giving to all causes is concerned. No more lovely place than Blowing Rock in which to live is to be found anywhere," he asserted. But he submitted his resignation, hoping in future to find "a field of work . . . without the extremes of climatic change, and also without the unduly heavy burdens of a resort church." The congregation voted, with eight dissenters, in favor of accepting his resignation. Keys served a pulpit at the Bee Ridge Presbyterian Church, near Sarasota, Florida, from 1948 to 1950. He returned with his wife to live in Blowing Rock for much of each year

beginning in late 1951, but by then he had left the ministry; he was recalled to Rumple in 1956.¹⁸

On March 15, 1948, the congregation called the Rev. Robert D. Earnest, then preaching in Bessemer, Alabama, to fill the vacancy left by Keys's departure; Keys returned from Florida to moderate this meeting. Earnest would receive a salary of \$2875 annually, plus congregational contributions to the Ministers' Annuity Fund, moving expenses, and use of the unfurnished manse. The new minister was installed at a "delightful service" on May 2, at which the Rev. D. B. Gregory preached a sermon on "The Genius of Presbyterianism" and the "choir added to the service of worship with special music." Membership in the church stood at 190 as of April 1948; its total annual budget for 1949 was projected at \$5000, plus the Grandfather Home Day offering. Among the first decisions made by the session with the new preacher were to set the date for Grandfather Home Day, and to receive another "Home Church Day" offering during the summer of 1948.¹⁹ Financial weakness still clearly plagued the church – and clouded the new minister's future.

The summer 1948 Grandfather Home Day drew a wider notice than usual. The *Charlotte Observer* Sunday column, "Captain Mecklenburg," on August 8 saluted David Ovens as "outstanding benefactor of Grandfather Orphanage because of the large amounts of money that have been raised for its support" at the programs he had helped to sponsor at Rumple since 1940.²⁰ The collection received that day was \$11,500; later ones would top even that large sum. But while the amount of the collection would be still greater in later years, it seems appropriate to describe the relationship Ovens had with Rumple Church at this point in its history, because of the impact of that relationship upon the new pastor, the Rev. Earnest, and his successors.

Ovens was already one of the best known figures in North Carolina when he had Cameron Williams build a vacation home, "Pineacres," for him in Blowing Rock during the mid-1930's. A native of Canada, Ovens arrived in Charlotte after having lived in several Southern cities, in 1903. J. B. Ivey took him on as a partner in his department store a short time later. Ovens worked with three generations of the Ivey family before his death in 1957, and he helped the store grow to a sizeable regional chain.

He was a born salesman. During his early years with Ivey's his "tart comments" were a regular feature of the company's ads in the *Charlotte Observer*; he had a "wicked sense of humor,"²¹ which he turned as often on himself as on others. Working his way quickly into the Queen City's coterie of the self-styled elite, Ovens loved to poke their ribs, figuratively, for their pretentiousness and narrow-mindedness. His memoir, *If This Be Treason*, published in 1957, is full of clever stories about the people he knew and admired – and some he did not – who led the city he came to know so well. Ovens was a ceaseless promoter of his adopted city through channels both public and private: he was the first president of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, president of its Merchants Association, and in many other ways a sparkplug to Charlotte's growth for nearly half a century. His "honors and activities" take up a full page of small print in his autobiography.²²

Perhaps his two favorite diversions were culture and religion, both of which Ovens was convinced needed to be nurtured by the town's business community. In Charlotte he actively encouraged the performing arts, personally seeking the backing of the city's leading citizens for everything from circus appearances to opera to theatre. When in the mid-1950's the auditorium which bears his name and the nearby coliseum were built, he received an appropriate monument, even if he did not much care for the architecture.²³ And although he often called for greater ecumenism among the Christian denominations, and had a sneaking admiration for the Baptists with their "simple ritual, . . . profound conviction of the power of Christ to save souls, and . . . humility,"²⁴ he remained a staunch Presbyterian. Ovens was chairman of the building committee and a generous benefactor of his home church, Myers Park Presbyterian, built in 1926, and of Charlotte's Presbyterian Hospital, completed in 1940.²⁵ The two Southern Presbyterian colleges in Mecklenburg County, Queens and Davidson, each named buildings in tribute to his generosity to them.

Such an energetic and dominant personality, and such a clever tongue, did not really relax on holiday. Ovens even had some frank things to say about his adopted summer home town:²⁶

Blowing Rock is developing into quite a fine resort. It has a number of excellent hotels, and one, the Mayview Manor, attracts the rich because of its high prices and good food. The high prices alone would be enough to fill the house, because people like to send cards back home from a place like that.

Nor did he much approve of the Blue Ridge Parkway:

I had quite forgotten to mention the Blue Ridge Parkway, which we are all paying taxes to build. We could do very well without it, and there are very few accommodations on the route. The speed limit is definitely prescribed, and most people prefer the regular road. They are extending it this summer through the Cone Estate in Blowing Rock. As I spend some time there each summer, I go out to see the progress they are making. The speed isn't much, but the expense looks to be terrific. Since we are mortgaging our future to take care of it, we could get along without it.

One wonders what Ovens would have thought of the complex and expensive Linn Cove Viaduct around Grandfather Mountain, which in the summer of 1987 completed the last link in the Parkway's route.

Dr. Keys later wrote that Ovens's house overlooking the golf course in Blowing Rock was host to "the great and the near great, the talented and the famous, the rich and the poor, all [of them] thankful that they have been permitted to share in the hospitality and gracious living within [its] walls." To this house Keys had been summoned in 1940 when he first came to Rumble's pulpit: "'Come out here NOW,'" he remembered Ovens ordering. "'I want to talk to you.'" "The first question asked by Mr. Ovens was, "'What are they paying you here?'" After Keys gave him the answer, Ovens "snorted and said, "That's not enough to starve to death on decently, must [sic] less send your children to school. I'll call Luther Snyder, Bob Dunn and Charley Cannon to join me, as a Committee to see that you get a supplement to this each year.'"

Ovens also wanted to know what Keys thought of Grandfather Home Day, which, Ovens said, "'I seem to have inherited from Dr. Vance. Not that I'm worthy to have blacked Dr. Vance's boots; but somebody has to carry on.'" Keys praised the project as "'the greatest thing any church could sponsor.'" "'Then let's make it the biggest thing on the mountain,'" Ovens replied, indicating his intention to get several of "the great stars of the musical world" to perform at the church on the Home's behalf.²⁷

Beginning in 1941, then, as we have seen, the Grandfather Home Concerts did indeed become big-time entertainment. But more than that, an ad hoc committee of summer residents had decided to supplement the preacher's admittedly-small salary, starting with Keys's. Ovens, with his sharp wit and strong personality, had begun to play a well-meant but potentially divisive role in the affairs of the church. The next pastor at Rumble turned out to be less willing to accommodate the vigorous Charlotte merchant.

Robert Doggett Earnest's background was not much different from

that of his two immediate predecessors: he was a native of Chuckey, Tennessee, a small Appalachian mountain town about halfway between Johnson City and Greeneville, where he was born in 1911. The family was modestly well off, but not wealthy, and by the time Earnest was ready for college, his father thought he had accumulated enough money to see his son and a daughter through school and to have a comfortable retirement. Then came the 1929 stock market crash and the Depression. The banks failed; the elder Earnest lost his entire savings; and he was found to have terminal cancer. Young Robert Earnest first attended nearby Tusculum College, walking or catching a lift to the campus four miles from his home. In 1931 the family moved to Johnson City, so that his sister could attend East Tennessee State Teachers' College. The widowed mother rented two upstairs rooms to college students to help make ends meet. Earnest finished at King College in 1933, where for the first year his only source of income was a scholarship for playing the Sousaphone (an instrument he had never picked up before) in the college marching band. For two years after graduation he worked to help his sister finish school; then a family relation helped in turn to support the would-be ministerial student for a year's study at Columbia Bible College, in South Carolina, and at Columbia Theological Seminary, in Decatur, Georgia; here Earnest earned the B. D. degree in 1939.

After a short pastorate in Decatur, where he met and married Katherine Erwin Belser, he served on the mission field in Brazil for three years, 1940 to 1943. There the first of the couple's four children was born. But Katherine Earnest's health was increasingly at risk: she had developed diabetes, and they were forced to come home. Returning first to another charge in Georgia, Earnest was called to the North Highlands Church in Bessemer, Alabama, in 1945. Two more children had by now arrived. Their youngest, a daughter, would be born during their stay at Blowing Rock. The call to Rumple Memorial must have seemed to the Tennessean an opportunity to return with his family to the region of his roots.²⁸

Earnest's brief tenure provided him an opportunity to reorganize the Sunday school teaching staff and the Men of the Church, see alterations in the board of deacons (Doss Keller, Sr., and Rob Walser were elected in July of 1948), hold evangelistic meetings late in that year, and, in March 1949, attempt a Visitation Evangelism Program. Under this program, then in vogue throughout the denomination, the pastor was to train carefully-chosen laypersons to go two by two into local homes and "in a friendly manner . . . secure decisions for Christ and membership for the church." Across the South the program had great

success during the late 1940's and 1950's; it seems to have gone nowhere in Blowing Rock.²⁹ Several young people joined the church during Earnest's pastorate, but most had grown up in the Rumble congregation: Jerry and Judy Burns, Janice Coffey, David Greene, Mary Keller and Doss Keller, Jr., and Joe White and Thomas Buxton (who soon transferred to the Episcopal Church).

Earnest took part in an unusual ecumenical event during the summer of 1948: he performed in a series of "religious dramas" put on by representatives of all Blowing Rock faiths "as part of a move to cultivate more dramatic interests here." According to the *Blowing Rocket*, a cast which included Dr. Morris Lazon, the Rev. Oscar Harris, Bishop Thomas C. Darst, Earnest, and several local laypeople from various churches, gave a dramatic stage presentation of the Book of Judith, directed by Professor H. E. Spence and Mrs. Margaret Reineking. "Such an enthusiastic reception was given [this drama] which was presented in the Baptist Church that it was decided to hold another." The second play, "The Sacrifice of Isaac," was "selected from Dr. H. E. Spence's book, *Old Testament Dramas*" and was given at Rumble church accompanied by "a suitable program of music and worship." Besides cultivating "dramatic interests," Earnest may have thought to hit upon a way to draw a crowd to Sunday evening worship service. The experiment seems to have been called off after a few weeks, however.³⁰ Earnest also discovered upon his arrival in Blowing Rock that he and Margaret Vance were distant cousins, through his mother's family. He furthered his musical interests by getting "Miss Margaret" to give him organ lessons on the Rumble instrument.

But if the new pastor was enjoying some of the opportunities which serving a resort church had to offer, some of its other features were not to his liking. The little town of Blowing Rock was growing in the postwar years. Earnest recalled one of his pastoral tasks as helping in the "recovery of people from the ravages of the war." More money was in town by this time. Links to the larger North Carolina tourist industry were becoming more extensive. The highway 321 bypass around the east side of town was under construction, Earnest remembered, during his years in Blowing Rock; and as more visitors than ever flocked to the town, the inevitable growing pains, perhaps not yet eased in the village, began to have their effect.

By 1948, national Prohibition had been for fifteen years a memory, but it was still impossible to get a (legal) bottle of whiskey in Blowing Rock. This suited Rumble's preacher and his wife just fine, but not a lot of the summer crowd. A campaign to put an ABC store in town began that summer, and Earnest joined most of Blowing Rock's other

preachers in opposing the idea. In taking this stance, Earnest reflected what had been for more than sixty years the stated policy of the denomination. In 1891 the General Assembly had spoken out against "the traffic in intoxicating liquors as a fruitful source of abounding iniquity and misery" and had "urged its people to use all means, which might be approved by their Christian conscience and judgment to remedy this evil." Individual abstinence remained the basic position of the church for the next half-century or more.³¹ Some militant Presbyterians did as individuals support the work of Prohibition political parties, the Anti-Saloon League, and the Womens' Christian Temperance Union, in ridding states and communities of liquor, but the church's highest court refused to endorse the specific political remedies often brought before it for support, on grounds of the separation of church and state.

During Prohibition, the General Assembly and other church courts did of course heartily favor upholding the law of the land. But after Repeal, "It gradually became clear . . . that total abstinence was no longer accepted, as it once was, as the ideal by the average church member, by officers of the church, and even by ministers."³² The denomination, with much reluctance in some synods and presbyteries, was slowly coming to the view that "there were devoted Christians who maintained that temperance, rather than abstinence, was the true Christian ideal."³³

Earnest, and many others in his congregation and community, were hardly ready for such an attitude. In any event, taking a drink in private was less the issue than the threat to public morals, especially among the youth, which the open availability of liquor, it was believed, would create. The sale of alcohol in any North Carolina community long has been a fool proof issue for dividing the public and rousing emotions. In Blowing Rock the matter tended to pit many of the summer people, an increasing number of whom were not native to the state, and, less openly, a few of the local people who profited from tourism, against the mass of the churchgoing population and their preachers—and a few bootleggers who had long earned a few dollars supplying their local and out of town customers with the home made product.

Blowing Rock did not approve an ABC store for another twenty-two years, in 1965. But Earnest apparently had earned few points from some of his summer parishioners for his outspoken opposition to the idea. Ovens, for example, believed that "If you want to cut down on the consumption of intoxicants in our city, it cannot be done by law, but must come about through the teaching in the home, the churches, and

perhaps our schools and colleges as well." He was speaking in this instance of Charlotte, where, he said in his memoirs, the ABC "method of supplying the demands of the liquor drinkers is generally considered acceptable," although he regretted that "too much liquor [is] used in Charlotte" and that "such boring things as cocktail parties are becoming more common all the time."

Ovens's influence in the Blowing Rock summer community was always strong. In late 1946 he had proposed to pastor Keys "a plan to build a church for the colored people who came [to Blowing Rock] during summer months as employees of summer residents." As has been shown, the black community had long worshipped Sunday nights at Rumble Church. The new project bore fruit during Earnest's pastorate: an incorporated, non-profit "Blowing Rock Community Church" was organized, with an all-white board of trustees which included Annie Cannon, Ovens, Grover C. Robbins, Mrs. Julius Cone, C. G. Beck, J. Luther Snyder, and C. H. Berryman. The trustees were to "establish and maintain suitable places for religious worship and recreation for negro people at Blowing Rock" and to "purchase, lease and otherwise dispose of all kinds of property, both real and personal" in the prosecution of their purpose.³⁴

A building was soon erected, by local contractor Will Castle, on two acres of property off Possum Hollow Road donated in 1948. Keys later remembered that Snyder, a textile mill owner from Gastonia, was the largest contributor to the building fund.³⁵ Equipped at first with chairs borrowed from the Horse Show grounds, the little chapel not long after was fitted with pews and walls of white pine (Mrs. Cannon reportedly insisted on the best building materials). Sometime later a community center was built on the same property, which, with kitchen facilities, became the scene of social gatherings of the black community. The building was refurbished in 1955, at which time Dr. Keys, having returned to town, was elected chairman of the board of trustees, and Howard Holshouser its secretary. The minutes of an August 1955 board meeting show that "Mrs. Cone was asked to compose a letter to be sent out to all summer home and business owners who employed colored help, soliciting contributions for repairs and maintenance." The buildings served their purpose until the dwindling number of parishioners forced them to close during the 1970's. In 1982 the church building was leased to the First Independent Baptist Church; the community center building still stood vacant as of 1987. Numerous members of the Rumble summer congregation served on the board over the years, including Gwyn Harper, Jr., Anne Snively, Kirby

Brown, wife of the Rev. Brown, by then pastor of the White Memorial Church of Raleigh, and others.

For some fifteen years after his retirement in 1960, Eugene S. Bowman, of Mocksville and Blowing Rock, an active leader among the Rumple summer crowd, preached regularly for the black congregation. He recalled in a 1968 article in *The Blowing Rocket* the sense which he and other whites felt, that their work provided them "a tremendous opportunity to help make right some of the things so wrong among people of different races."³⁶ To what extent that motive prevailed when the original plan was put forward by Ovens in 1946 would now be difficult to judge, as the great divide in race relations had not been crossed before the 1960's. Nevertheless, the monetary generosity and the sense of responsibility exhibited by Ovens and his original collaborators, including Keys, cannot be questioned. It is perhaps significant that, although Keys was later to take an active part on the board of the Negro Community Church, and to preach there at least once each season, the board did not include Earnest, the Rumple Church pastor, when it was incorporated in 1949.

Earnest recalled in 1987 that during his stay at Rumple he found it difficult to relate to the summer crowd around Ovens. He did not play golf, nor did he enjoy the country club life or attending the parties of the summer people. And, he recalled, he was rather young then; he was perhaps less tolerant, he has said, than he might be today, particularly on the sensitive issue of strong drink. It especially did not "set right" with him that summer members would personally supplement the minister's salary. When a summer resident made an exploratory approach on the subject, Earnest did not respond. The summer people, he believed, should make their contributions directly to the church treasurer.³⁷

For this point of personal principle Earnest suffered some financial hardship. In November 1949 the session informed him "of the likelihood of the church not being able to pay his salary," \$2875, in full. His subsequent efforts to "build up the treasury" from among the active membership seem to have had little effect. In January 1950, the session agreed to provide the pastor with a month's paid vacation in March, and an unpaid leave of absence for April, in order for him to complete the Master's of Theology degree at Columbia Seminary. He studied there, living with his wife's family, until he finished his work. Meanwhile he paid attention to the possibilities for changing churches. Armed with a call to a pastorate in Louisiana, he returned to Blowing Rock and at a congregational meeting in May announced his resignation, effective on or near June 1, 1950. "The congregation voted to

receive the vote on the resignation by standing vote." By twenty-five to five it gave Earnest "a vote of confidence and protest against the pastor leaving but with the understanding also that the Presbytery would dissolve the pastoral relationship."³⁸

For six months thereafter the pulpit was vacant. Various pastors filled in, including, during August of that year, the Rev. Oren Moore, Jr., of the McKinnon Presbyterian Church of Concord, and others. The bulletin for the Sunday Moore preached noted that the church budget was \$5000, "and about two-fifths of this must be received through special contributions. This is the only way we can continue as a self-sup[porting] church and secure a resident year round pastor." Visitors were urged to contribute or make a pledge to the cause.³⁹ Not until the very last day of December, 1950, did the congregation meet again to receive the recommendation of a pulpit committee, consisting of clerk of session J. P. Lyon, H. P. Holshouser, Sarah Payne, Margaret Vance, and C. R. Walser, to call a new pastor to Rumble Church: the Rev. Sam S. Cappel.

The twenty-six year old Cappel was accepting his first pulpit call. He had in fact not yet received his degree from Columbia Theological Seminary and was not ordained by Holston Presbytery until April 1951. A native of Alexandria, Louisiana, Cappel had attended Louisiana State University and Louisiana Tech, where he received his undergraduate degree in 1948. Married that year to Mary Ann Denny, a native of Weaverville, North Carolina, Cappel and his wife eventually had three children.

Cappel's year at Rumble was almost too short a time to leave a lasting impact, but he is remembered in the community for his zeal on the issue of illegal alcohol. Like his predecessor, he was against it. But his crusade extended beyond the pulpit or the parlor: his frank opposition led him to carry the war straight to the perceived enemy. In that era the most notorious hangouts for moonshiners were in certain homes barely a block off Main Street. As the new preacher saw it, the openness with which the stuff was being dispensed was a community affront. Invoking the law, he helped set up a few, frustratingly ineffectual raids. The network of small town connections must have been too dense to overcome. More than a decade would still be needed to change the community's habits concerning home brew. Did Cappel realize that in taking out after the bootleggers he was only helping to provide an ultimately successful justification for moderate drinkers to seek a legal source for their booze?

Cappel was as zealous for his understanding of the faith as for public morality. Although there is little in the church records to reveal his

sermon topics or his Sunday school lessons, all indicators point to a strongly conservative bent. He persuaded the session to begin again holding Sunday evening church services "after the Young People's Meeting." He urged support for a "city-wide Revival" planned for April of 1952. And he arranged a Bible Conference at Rumple Church in late August, 1951, conducted by Dr. R. A. Forrest, of the non-denominational but conservative Toccoa Falls Bible Institute in Georgia. In the short time he preached at Rumple he seems also to have run up against resistance in the session and board of deacons; clerk of session John P. Lyons, although usually in attendance at meetings, seems never to have signed the minutes; Cappel kept them himself. One elder and one deacon resigned during his pastorate, although their reasons were not recorded. By December, 1951, an uneasy relationship came to an end with Cappel's decision to take a chaplaincy in the United States Navy: the Korean War was underway and Cappel must have welcomed the black-and-white certainties of that cold war struggle turned hot. He was back in Holston Presbytery just over a year later, preaching in Tennessee, but he eventually split with the denomination and joined the strongly conservative Presbyterian Church in America.⁴⁰

Cappel's departure brought another period of drift at Rumple Church. From the end of 1951 to April 1953 the session held only two recorded meetings, one to authorize a tribute *in memoriam* to the last of Rumple's original elders, Joe White, who died in February, 1952. In the summer of 1952, the pulpit was filled at least part of the time by the Rev. Warren Thurston, pastor of the Hendersonville Church, who served communion at Rumple in July and was given session approval to "conduct radio devotional[s]" during the weeks of August 3-9 and 17-23, 1952.⁴¹ Finally in April, 1953, with the Rev. J. K. Parker of the First Church of Boone moderating, a congregational meeting unanimously called the Rev. Leroy T. Newland from Union Point, Georgia, to fill the long-vacant pulpit, at \$3600 a year plus a "sum equivalent to 7 1/2% of the salary base" into the Ministers' Annuity Fund. Newland's pastorate would run for a little more than three years.

While Cappel had come to Rumple for his first pastorate, Newland came for his last. Already sixty-eight in 1953, Newland had given the most vigorous years of his ministry to the mission field at Chonju,

Korea. There he and his wife, Sarah Louise Andrews, had reared seven children, including a son, H. Reid Newland, who also entered the Presbyterian ministry and who attended his father's installation service at Rumble to preach the sermon, on July 26, 1953. The elder Newland was born in Galva, Iowa, and was a 1908 graduate of Davidson College and of Louisville Theological Seminary, where he received the B. D. degree in 1911; he had taken furlough from his Korean work to complete a Master of Theology degree at Union Seminary in 1926. Davidson awarded him the Doctor of Divinity degree in 1933. From his return to the United States in 1940 until his call to Rumble, Dr. Newland served a group of churches in Union Point, Georgia.

Among Newland's lifelong avocations was writing poetry. In 1963 he published privately an eighty-six-page book, *So Rich A Crown*, containing poems from his years in Korea, Georgia, and North Carolina. If his poetic language and meter were rather heavily borrowed from the King James version of the Bible, and his subject matter mostly fairly traditional, some of his poems showed an ability to speak of faith in simple but moving terms. One, "A Christian's Death," was reprinted in the notice of Newland's own death in the *Christian Observer*; it may originally have been composed in tribute to L. D. Tester when he died in Blowing Rock in 1953:⁴²

And what is death?
A sudden stopping of the breath
That one may breathe a rarer air
Where all is fair.

You say he died.
Can life be greater glorified
Than to unclothe pain-wearied eyes
In Paradise?

Is this the end?
He has but gone to meet a Friend
And, dying, found a way
To endless day.

Another of Newland's poems, "A Little Child's Gift," put in poetic language an unusually-imagined scene of Christmas:

I wonder if a little child
Saw Jesus as he lay
Within a manger rude and old
Upon the soft sweet hay?

I wonder if a little child
 Smiled back to meet his smile,
And gently touched his dimpled cheek
 And held his hand a while?

I do not know what children did
 In days so long ago
But I can give myself to Him,
 Because He loves me so.

Several displayed a deep love for his wife and his family, and an eloquent affection for the North Carolina mountain region in which he spent his last years. In Korea, too, he lived "in the midst of the mountains." When he later wrote a tribute to Walter Keys upon Keys's retirement from the Bee Ridge Church in Florida, Newland's prose reached poetic heights: he reminded his friend that they shared "memories of Thunder Hill Overlook with Blackberry Valley far below," and the "delicate perfume of shy, half hidden trailing arbutus sprinkled on the robe of winter as it welcomes the return of spring." He urged Keys to store up his "recollections until one day, when the purpling shadows slip into John's River Gorge and the rays of the dying sun are rekindled in the winking lights of homes hidden by the darkness and you lift your eyes to see a thoughtful sun spread a rose colored mantle over the rock hewn Grandfather who sleeps endlessly on a distant mountain top, then surrounded by the grandeur of a mountain sunset you will 'see your heavenly home and take flight.'"⁴³

With a change of place names, Newland might well have been describing the sights from his own retirement home, at Black Mountain, where he died in 1969.

Newland and his wife arrived in Blowing Rock in April, 1953. The first session meeting at which he moderated received Cecil E. Rhodes into the membership by transfer of letter from the Crabtree Baptist Church in Hendersonville; Rhodes would take an active role in the Sunday school, on the board of deacons, and later as elder, until his death. But the frequent pastoral changes and the gaps in church leadership during the preceding two years had affected the church's work. Newland's responsibility included training or retraining the church officers in their duties; stressing tithing and the every-member canvass; and arranging special services led by such preachers as the Revs. H. H. Van Cleve and William Henry Crane. At a session meeting in November 1954, "A list of men and women in the community who should be in the Church was read by Dr. Newland who urged all officers to talk with and invite them to Church." Home visitation, by the

pastor and his wife, and church officers, was frequently invoked to stimulate church attendance. In early 1956 a series of cottage prayer meetings and early morning Bible studies was arranged in anticipation of another round of special services to be led by the Rev. Thurston—but Thurston was forced to cancel his planned appearances when his mother became gravely ill in April.

The Newlands' stress upon attendance, participation, and giving seem to have had their effect, however; where membership had declined under Cappel (during his year the roll had apparently been reviewed and some names of inactive members removed), it increased again somewhat under Newland. For 1956 the church membership was reported at 127, up from 112 in 1951; Sunday school enrollment was 89, compared to 81 five years earlier. And the budget for current expenses had increased from \$2106 to \$6061.⁴⁴

During late 1954 the congregation met to approve unanimously a premature but significant request to Holston and Concord Presbyteries: it asked to rejoin the Synod of North Carolina and the Presbytery of Concord. On the grounds that part of the town was in Caldwell County, which was still in Concord Presbytery, and because of its highway links and the educational connections of its college-age student membership, it sought to be taken back into the presbytery of its birth. The church acknowledged "a lack of close personal interest in most of the debate carried on in [Holston] Presbytery and the plans for expanding the work" there, which primarily involved planting churches in the "fast growing cities and their environs in east Tennessee." Not until 1969 was this petition made again, and granted. Holston Presbytery disapproved of the original request; there is no evidence that Concord Presbytery discussed it in 1954.⁴⁵

In February 1956 Dr. Newland informed the session of his intention to retire on June 1. He had already stayed a year beyond his seventieth birthday.⁴⁶ The church, and region, although they did not know it, were poised on the brink of even greater changes. If the 1950's have been characterized as an era of national complacency in many historical accounts, the attitude may be excusable in the local case. Material growth was clearly perceptible; the generation which had fought two wars overseas was busy raising families at home and finding itself increasingly linked to a state and nation led by men proud to have built a country that was the envy of the world. It is thus perhaps not surprising that for its next pastor, Rumble Memorial decided to go with a proven leader: it recalled the Rev. Walter K. Keys. The Lord, Keys later remembered, was not through with him yet.

Notes on Chapter Four

1. Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring meeting 1941, pp. 32-33; *ibid.*, fall meeting 1941, pp. 15-16. *Ministerial Directory*, 1956 edition. "Blowing Rock is Grieved At Death of Edgar H. Tufts," *The Blowing Rocket*, June 20, 1942, p. 1. Southall later served as executive secretary of the Presbytery of Concord from 1954 to 1966, the period just before Rumple rejoined that presbytery.
2. Minutes of Holston Presbytery, spring 1941 meeting, pp. 32-33; and fall 1941 meeting, pp. 15-16.
3. RMPC Session Records, [1932-1948] pp. 117, 125; printed program for 1940 concert in RMPC Scrapbook, Volume 1. See also copies of session reports to the General Assembly for these years, in Session Records. In the summer of 1941, \$3894 was raised for the work of Grandfather Home; in 1942, \$4810; in 1943, \$5475; in 1944, \$6886; and in 1945, \$7060: *ibid.*, pp. 124, 128, 132, 136, 141. Local residents sometimes forget that the singers Ovens brought to town almost always gave concerts at Banner Elk while they were in the area. These were attended by the summer community there as well as children from the Home and students and faculty of Lees-McRae. Income received from the concerts in Banner Elk usually went to support the work of the hospital there. Ovens, never a poor salesman, made sure that the artists got to see first hand the causes for which they were working. Neal, *Sacred Flame*, pp. 141-147, and oral interview with M. T. Neal, summer 1986.
4. RMPC Session Records, pp. 126, 130, 131.
5. *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 126, 130, 131. The clerk of Holston Presbytery questioned the procedure whereby a deceased person was put on the church roll; but there is no indication of any further action on the matter in the session or presbytery records: *ibid.*, p. 135.
6. I am grateful to Perry Lentz for allowing the church to copy two such bulletin-newsletters, from Easter 1944 and Easter 1945; copies now in church records.
7. RMPC bulletin, Easter Sunday, April 9, 1944. During the summer of 1942, Julia and Billy Keys, along with Ann Coffey, edited *The Blowing Rocket*.
8. RMPC bulletin, Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945.
9. *Christian Observer*, January 17, 1940, tribute "placed by the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions." Vance served on this committee from 1895 to 1901, and chaired it from 1911 to 1937. See also obituary in *New York Times*, November 25, 1939, p. 17.
10. Interview with Rudolph Greene, December 1986.
11. *Minutes of General Assembly and Executive Committee Reports*, 1939, Appendix, pp. 103-106.
12. See obituaries, *New York Times*, September 8, 1943, p. 23, and *Charlotte Observer*, same date, second section, p. 1.

13. Letter, Vance to Martin, May 31, 1929, in W. J. Martin Papers, Davidson College Archives.

14. RMPC Session Records, p. 123, clipping from church bulletin. Holshouser died March 29, 1942, after an illness of about two weeks. The records show he acted as clerk at session meetings until January of that year. He was seventy-three. His widow, Laura, was eighty-seven at the time of her death in May 1962: clipping, *The Blowing Rocket*, in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I.

15. RMPC Session Records, pp. 119, 126, 137, 140, 143, 145.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 145. I can find no record of a David Baker in the *Ministerial Directory*; was he a member of another denomination?

17. *Ibid.*, p. 147. At presbytery that spring, when the minutes were examined, these procedures were questioned, but no indication was given that they were found irregular: "Report on minutes of the session of the Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church," inserted at *ibid.*, p. 154.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 151-157.

20. "Observer Lauds Orphanage Day," *The Blowing Rocket*, August 13, 1948. On J. A. Parham's column, which ran from 1926 to 1951 in the *Observer*, see Claiborne, *The Charlotte Observer*, pp. 232-233.

21. Claiborne, *The Charlotte Observer*, p. 160.

22. David Ovens, *If This Be Treason: A Look At His Town and Times* (Charlotte, NC: Heritage House, 1957), p. 215 and *passim*. This book was published a few months before his death. See also his obituaries, *New York Times*, September 7, 1957, p. 19, and *The Charlotte Observer*, same date, p. 1A. The *Observer* editorialized on the next day that at age eighty-four, Ovens had "seemed ageless - a mood more than a man, a provocative spirit sprinkled with impertinence, an elfin sage with a Midas touch and a social conscience. . . . He was vain in the manner of men who recognize their capacities. His wit could sear as well as enchant. His bias, though limited, was often pronounced. But David Ovens added a sound, impressive sum in a time of fractional standards. . . . His contributions to Charlotte, and to his fellow man, were many and meaningful. His achievements remain as a lasting testimonial to human nobility." "David Ovens, The Books Closed," *ibid.*, September 8, 1957, p. 2C.

23. Ovens, *If This Be Treason*, p. 32.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

25. See Thomas F. Clark, *History of Myers Park Presbyterian Church 1926-1966* (Charlotte, NC: Myers Park Presbyterian Church, 1966), *passim*.

26. Both quotations are in Ovens, *If this Be Treason*, p. 83.

27. Keys, "Reminiscences Of The House That David Built," *Blowing Rock Journal*, August 16, 1960, clipping in Keys Papers, Historical Foundation, Montreat.

28. Dr. Mary Warfield drove Mrs. Earnest to North Wilkesboro for a Caesarian delivery of their fourth child, Lynn. One of their sons, Robert, is retarded; they recalled in 1987 that many church members were extremely kind to the boy and to the family during their years in town. From Blowing Rock, Earnest went to Maplewood, Louisiana; he was Stated Clerk of Louisiana Presbytery until 1957. He then became executive secretary of Augusta-Macon Presbytery, Georgia, retiring in 1974. Earnest and his wife now live year-round at a home they built in Montreat in 1957. As of this writing, he is stated supply at the Bethel Presbyterian Church outside of Waynesville, N. C., preaching twice a month. *Ministerial Directory*, 1983 edition, and oral interview with Earnest and his wife in Montreat, August 1987.

29. RMPC Session Records, "Book No. 2," pp. 3, 5. For the larger story: Thompson, *Presbyterians*, III, pp. 407-409. Earnest recalled that the session at Rumple seemed reluctant to take part in the program. It was one of the frustrations he experienced in what he felt otherwise was a pleasant pastorate in Blowing Rock: oral interview, August 1987.

30. "Baptist Church To House Coming Play" and "Second Religious Play To Be Sunday," *The Blowing Rocket*, July 16 and August 13, 1948. References kindly supplied by Karen Lohr.

31. Thompson, *Presbyterians*, III, p. 234.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 512.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 513.

34. "Certificate of Incorporation of Blowing Rock Negro Community Church, Incorporated," copy in RMPC papers. Other references in the following paragraphs are in the same folder.

35. Keys, "The Church and Community Center for Colored People," 1 p. typescript in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. 1.

36. Bowman, "The Community Church," *The Blowing Rocket*, August 29, 1968; clipping in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I.

37. Oral interview with Earnest, August 1987.

38. RMPC Session Records, "Book No. 2" [1948-1965], p. 8, and insert between pp. 178-179.

39. RMPC Sunday bulletin, August 27, 1950; in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. 1.

40. *Ministerial Directory*, 1983 edition; oral interviews with Perry Lentz and Rudolph Greene.

41. RMPC Session Records, Book 2, pp. 16-17. Thurston was pastor at Hendersonville from 1952 to 1961; he preached frequently at Rumple during the 1950's, holding a series of evangelistic meetings almost every autumn in those years.

42. *Christian Observer*, September 10, 1969. Gladys Tester has preserved a copy of the poem on RMPC stationery which Newland gave to her mother, "Written in memory of my dear friend L. D. Tester at the time of his death."

But the published version, in Newland, *So Rich a Crown: Poems of Faith* (Atlanta: privately printed, 1963), p. 39, uses feminine pronouns. "A Little Child's Gift," *ibid.*, p. 23.

43. Letter, Newland to Keys, "This is Your Life" scrapbook, n.d. [1963].

44. RMPC Session Records, pp. 22-35; Minutes of the General Assembly, Statistical Reports for 1950, 1956. During 1953 the date for submitting church year statistical reports was changed from April 1 to December 31.

45. Copy of petition in RMPC Session Records, "Book 2," p. 186. Without much evidence, the author suspects that the Rev. Keys was the instigator of this request. Comparison of typed documents prepared by Keys with those from Newland's typewriter would indicate that the petition was typed in Keys's own, instantly-recognizable typing style: it shows strikeovers, absences of space between sentences, and vigorous strikes on the period key, all typical of Keys. Since by 1954 Keys was living more or less full time in Blowing Rock, it is at least possible he typed the draft version which is in the records.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-42.

Leaps of Faith, 1956–1973

BY THE SPRING OF 1956, Keys was sixty-three. He and his wife, Eleanor, who worked as a secretary and receptionist for Dr. Davant at the Blowing Rock Hospital, had been living in Blowing Rock for much of each year since late 1951 at the family's cottage, "the Keyhole," which they had built during his first pastorate. They attended Rumble Church regularly during this period, and, of course, were well known to most former members. Blowing Rock was home, and much of the town had taken them to its heart. Keys had found employment with the Chamber of Commerce and had directed the town's youth work. He had joined numerous civic organizations, including the Rotary Club, which he had helped to found during his earlier years in the community. In April a pulpit supply committee consisting of Mabel and Howard Holshouser, Margaret Vance, Collis Greene, and Bob Hardin, reported that its members had been in touch with Dr. Keys and obtained from him an "outline and memorandum . . . relative to plans and proposals for his present work and services he could devote to this Church as Temporary Supply." Upon approval by presbytery's Commission on the Minister and His Work, Keys was engaged to preach temporarily, beginning upon Newland's retirement.

Reluctance on the part of the session was clear, however. For some, the question was whether his health would permit him to resume full time pastoral duties at the church. In August Dr. John Yelton came over from Holston Presbytery to explain that recent revisions in the *Book of Church Order* made it possible to engage Keys as occasional, rather than temporary supply pastor. The session so voted, without objection.¹

But Keys was apparently able to dispel some doubts about his capacities during the summer. In September a congregational meeting voted 42–19 to call him full-time. When on October 1, Mr. and Mrs.

Joel McCurry gave a reception at their home in Mayview Park for the retiring minister, Newland, and his wife and for the newly-installed Keys and his wife, over a hundred people attended, "of all churches" in town and from many other places. The reception was noted in *The Blowing Rocket* as "the outstanding event of the 'turn-of-the-season.'"²

For at least the next three years, Keys proved able again to cope with the burdens of the resort ministry. His success was due in large part to the high quality of lay leadership he raised up and inspired at the church during this second tour of duty. Joint meetings of deacons and elders were held quarterly. Two additional elders, Wade Kluttz and Rudolph Greene, son of elder Collis Greene, and a deacon, Cecil Rhodes, had been elected in January of 1956; two more deacons, Joel C. McCurry and Thomas Wright, were chosen the following January. Regular additions were voted in each year during Keys's ministry. By June 1958, deacons Hardin and Rhodes were elected to membership on the session, and Dr. Curtis McGown, W. C. Lentz, Perry Lentz, and Robert L. S. Snyder had become deacons. All these men quickly took up important roles in the life of the church. A major task of the diaconate all through these years was the every member canvass and the personal contact program needed to follow up pledges of support given on "Volunteer Day" Sunday each October.

Perhaps the liveliest scene of lay activity during Keys's second pastorate was at the Sunday school, and especially in the men's Bible class. Former elder Rudolph Greene recalled being asked by Dr. Keys to help him get this class off its feet and make it a means of reaching men in the community who otherwise had no church affiliation. The existing class membership was divided into two teams, each headed by a "captain," which then competed for new members. The original captains, Perry Lentz remembers, were Gus Deaton and "Old Mr. Ed Love," a Gideon member who suffered from diabetes. Into the class were drawn—sometimes literally—men who had never darkened the door of any church in their lives. Even passersby on the sidewalk were urged to come in for study and fellowship. "Come on in, brother, you're welcome. This is the house of the Lord," Love would say. "I came in to get away from that big feller [Love]," at least one new member told the group. Once inside, all joined in the spirited hymn sings led by George Grove on the piano, who always "played with a little rhythm in his hymns," and heard a lesson given by Dr. Keys. Attendance soared, from a handful to, on occasion, more than fifty. Within two years, Rudolph Greene was made Sunday school superintendent, and Rhodes was president of the men's Bible class.³ Total reported Sunday school

attendance in all classes, 89 during Newland's last year, rose to 221 in Keys's.

Church membership also went up remarkably during the period, from a reported 139 during Keys's first year, to 208 in 1959. The pastor obviously had found much local response. Wise in the lore of the mountains, sharing in the pleasures of hunting and fishing with many of his flock, and always exhibiting a common touch and a faith in his fellow men and women, he won the loyalty of many.

The church bulletins of the later 1950's often reprinted Keys's sermons; others were collected in a pamphlet, "Meditations at Sunset," published not long before his retirement. Warm and earnest in tone, his sermons stuck close to the Scriptures and followed a numbered outline in the old-fashioned way. They invariably included an exhortation to listeners to the Lord's service which, if not of the altar-call variety, was distinctly "evangelistic." In other ways, too, Keys often sounded an old-fashioned note: by the 1950's his career had spanned the era of great growth and change in his beloved mountains. In the 1920's he had enthusiastically hailed the coming of economic development. A generation later he could reminisce fondly, in a sermon entitled "Big Business," about "the days when the village blacksmith, the dusty miller, the country merchant were the biggest business men we knew anything about." If it gave him "pause to know that the basic control in our huge defense production is so preponderantly [sic] exercised by a few concerns," he nevertheless still believed that "the Biggest Business" of all was the work of Jesus, who had come "to be about My Father's Business." ⁴

Keys cooperated regularly in the inter-church work so necessary in a small town like Blowing Rock, especially during the off season. A Baptist-Presbyterian Easter sunrise service became tradition during these years. Joint Thanksgiving services would follow. And in 1958 another round of ecumenical summer programs was held at Rumble, led again by Father Spence, "Rabbi" Lazon, Mrs. John Reiniking, and Keys. Grandfather Home Day services, always heavily attended by persons of many denominations, continued to be big items on the summer calendar of the resort community. The collection in 1958 raised \$17,767 and in 1959, \$18,578, the largest amount up to that time.

Keys's second pastorate brought another important ecumenical legacy, a sign of the involvement of lay people and summer people in the welfare of all Christians, including the young. The "Dunn Youth" work was provided from the income which the church began receiving from a fund established by Robert A. Dunn of Charlotte to support Christian

and recreational work among the youth of Blowing Rock. Robert A. Dunn was for many years a prominent Charlotte banker. He had first summered on the mountain in 1913, when he rented Dr. William J. Martin's cottage, "Chestnut Knoll." At that time Dunn was in the wholesale drug business. He wrote Martin after that summer that he and his wife had "tucked the house in with care" and had left the key "subject to yours only" with "Mrs. Levi Crisp at the Tappen Cottage. We enjoyed our stay in your house very much. If *ever* the road becomes dependable I should, I think, become one of the 'regulars' there." When the roads improved, Dunn did indeed become a "regular": he purchased a sizable tract of land and built a large home across from the Green Park Inn, where he and his second wife summered every year until Dunn's death in 1945.

Dunn was an Alabama native of North Carolina stock whose Presbyterian faith expressed itself in service all his adult life. He was an elder and taught a young men's Bible class at First Presbyterian Church in Charlotte for many years. Davidson virtually adopted him. Although he had earned no degree from any college, it awarded him an honorary Doctor of Laws in 1925, selected him for its Board of Trustees in 1929, and made him the board's president emeritus in 1940. In 1931 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., the third prominent Blowing Rock summer resident and Rumble communicant to hold this high office.⁵

Upon the death of Dunn's wife, the legacy he had established in his estate began providing income for "Christian work among the youth of Blowing Rock, North Carolina." Under the will's provisions, five percent of his estate went to the Trustees of the General Assembly and to the Presbyterian Foundation of Charlotte, for such work, either in the form of a Young Men's Christian Association (Dunn's cousin, Lex Kluttz, was at the time secretary of the Charlotte YMCA), or, if no YMCA existed in Blowing Rock, "said funds shall be used through the . . . Presbyterian Church at Blowing Rock and/or the Board of Home Missions of the Presbytery of which said Church may be a part." The Rev. Mr. Keys was to have care and supervision of the work, according to the original terms. Dunn also left another five percent of his estate "for Christian work among the negro youth of Charlotte," to be administered through the YMCA there. It was his "desire that [the work in both places] shall include Bible study and instructions in Christian doctrine and belief, as well as provision for gymnasium indoor sports and outdoor sports, so that the mind, the body, and the spirit may all be developed in accordance with Christian doctrines."

Since the inception of the "Dunn Youth" work, countless projects

have been undertaken, almost always with ecumenical backing among the town's churches, for projects meeting Dunn's original specifications. The fund has made possible a small salary for a part-time "Dunn Youth Worker," and has been used to send children to church camps, buy sporting equipment, and fund nursery school projects, to help with the costs of special scouting programs, rent films, and hold seasonal celebrations. That Keys's ties to Dunn, going back to his first pastorate, had much to do with getting the fund established, is clear. It was a gesture on both their parts which has touched numerous young lives and hearts.

Local congregational needs were by the late 1950's also becoming apparent. In August, 1958, the session discussed buying or building a new manse, and using the older house as additional space for educational activities. A committee consisting of Bob Hardin, Curtis McGown, Dan Kluttz, Bill Lentz, and Howard Holshouser recommended that "an effort be made to solicit gifts and pledges toward a goal of \$25,000 for a new manse," no doubt from among the usual local and summer supporters.⁶ In May, 1959, "a suggestion for new lighting in Chapel & placing shutters on the windows to control outside light was presented by Dr. Keys for further study," but not acted upon. The project for a new manse was embraced, however. Bob Hardin was named to head a committee to organize the fundraising, with Bob Snyder as co-chair; other members were Bill Lentz, Mr. and Mrs. H. P. Holshouser, Sr., Jean Bolick, and Nell Greene. The session also voted to employ "regular cleaning women to clean Church and Chapel."⁷

Later that year Keys "went public" with his requests for improvements. It was a last request to the congregation he had twice led. He printed in the church bulletin "An Allegory by the Church," in which, assuming the *persona* of the church structure, he pointed out that "not more than \$2500 in real cash was ever invested in my building," which had served God's cause for over a half-century. Even "my 'alter-ego,' the Chapel, . . . was provided by the liberality of one great Christian." He invoked the programs the church had housed and supported over the years: the Grandfather Home offerings, the Good News Club, the "great men of God" who had preached from its pulpit: among them, "Rumple, Vardell, Vance, Tufts, Hoey, Broughton, Hodges, Cunningham, Jones, Gutzke, and, next week, Thompson." But "to be made comfortable for my people," he wrote, some changes were necessary: "a few well-placed heaters," "good lighting," a new organ, and, in the Chapel, better lights and "shuttered screens." He also indirectly appealed for relief from his own tasks: "I need the ringing voice, the alert

step, the hearty handshake of a young man, called to be my minister." But, he warned from experience and from behind his thin disguise,⁸

1. DON'T call any man unless you make the call unanimous. 2. DON'T call any man until you have a suitable home in which he may live. 3. DON'T call any man unless you are ready to provide him with an adequate competence for living; at least the average for town and city churches. 4. DON'T call any man unless you resolve to give him your presence at church and your prayers for his strengthening.

By that autumn Keys was approaching his sixty-seventh birthday. He had usually been able to get away on short vacation trips to Florida, or preach occasionally for other churches in his native region of Southwest Virginia, during his second stay at Rumble, but a certain restlessness seems to have taken him as retirement loomed. At a congregational meeting moderated by the Rev. Dr. Yelton on September 27, 1959, he read a statement announcing his intention to step down from the Rumble pulpit on the first of January of the following year. He said he intended to "ask Presbytery to give me, at least for the time being, the status of Honorably Retired with the privilege of doing evangelistic and supply work in the Presbytery and other areas." He intended to be available to his Rumble charge for supply work, and pastoral care, until a new minister was called, and, since he planned to "make Blowing Rock my latter-days home," to "be ready to help [the church] in anyway possible when needed." But he properly noted his expectation to "always be approached only through" the pastor and to consider "no church endeavors except at the invitation of the active pastor." He was, he said, in no way dissatisfied with Rumble Church or its work, but sought to do only "whatever work the Lord may have for me to do in the days ahead." By unanimous vote, with several members making regretful comments, the congregation voted to accept the resignation.⁹

In many ways Keys's retirement was the end of an era at Rumble Church. For nearly forty years he had been active, at presbytery and in Blowing Rock, on its behalf. Despite swings in his health and relocations to other responsibilities, he had made himself a part of the mountain resort community as perhaps no pastor has done before or since. Upon his death in 1973, he was buried at Blowing Rock, the only Rumble pastor whose remains rest among the mountains he knew and loved so well. Even more important than this earthly connection, he had put a spiritual stamp on his parishioners in the interest of his Master's cause. Several members of a generation raised under his

preaching still attend Rumble Church and remember him as one of the town's own.

Keys turned over the pulpit in 1960 to a representative of the younger generation, much as, nationally, the torch of government was passing to the young John F. Kennedy, the first president born in the twentieth century. If the Rev. Austin Blake Brinkerhoff was not the first Rumble pastor born in the current century, he was the first to bring a contemporary approach to much of the church's business. Yet he was building on a foundation which had been well established by his predecessors. He recalls today that he inherited a generally smooth-functioning and harmonious organization with no major problems. His five years were, for the brand-new pastor, personally rewarding; his congregation seems to have returned the compliment. Gracious, considerate, and sensible, he made many friends in the town. He and his wife, Jacqueline Spaulding, had two sons, Charles Edward ("Brinkie," during his childhood) and Austin Blake, Jr., ("Audie"), born in Blowing Rock; a third, Louis Robert, was born in Florida during his father's present pastorate at the Highlands Presbyterian Church in Daytona Beach.

Brinkerhoff, a member of the Davidson College class of 1956, entered Union Seminary in the fall of that year. Remarkably, three of the men in that entering class would one day become Rumble pastors: Brinkerhoff, the Rev. Richard Holshouser, and the Rev. Vaughn Earl Hartsell. Ordained and licensed in the summer of 1960 in Holston Presbytery, he moderated his first session meeting in Blowing Rock on August 2, 1960 (curiously, there is no record of the congregational meeting which must have been convened to call him). The Brinkerhoffs were to be the first residents of the new manse, already under construction. A special "Manse Day" service to raise money was held on August 28. The Farm House Singers provided the music (the first record of their appearance at the church), and, by vote of the session, Dr. Keys delivered the message. Perhaps the former pastor was picked because the project had been of such concern to him, and his fundraising talents were already known, while the new preacher was not yet a proven commodity.

The plan had been sparked in 1958 when Mrs. Annie Cannon and another summer resident, Earl Searcy of Valdese, purchased two lots

on South Wallingford Street and donated them to the church; over the next year the committee appointed to consider the matter moved slowly in planning for the new structure. "The very presence of the wooded area marked by the sign, 'site of new Presbyterian manse' struck fear in the hearts of many even as it brought hope to those who were cautiously optimistic."¹⁰ Advance pledges did not begin to meet costs, but work started in the summer of 1960. By September, builder Owen Coffey reported that an additional \$7000 would be needed to finish the job. It is not clear how much had already been spent up to this time, or how much was raised from the August service at which Keys preached, although the statistical report to the General Assembly for 1960 showed that \$4055 was raised that year for building expenses. Virtually all work was being done by local members: excavation, framing, plumbing, wiring, even making curtains. That fall, with full cooperation from the pastor, the elders and deacons began what was to stretch to nearly two years of fundraising effort. Chicken pie suppers were held almost monthly at the high school, with the deacons, chaired by Bruce Greene and motivated by Bob Hardin's enthusiasm for the project, doing most of the cooking. Another means of raising money was the sale of memorial plaques for the church pews; deacon Bob Snyder took charge of this part of the fundraising activity, which by the summer of 1961 had brought in some \$1,500 from Sunday school and church members. Today about one-fourth of the pews bear these memorials. During 1961, after much discussion, twenty-five church members voluntarily signed bank notes for \$200 each to underwrite the remainder of the building costs. No project the church had undertaken up to this time had involved so many members so directly.

It was a sign of the church's maturity when, in the fall of 1961, clerk of session Rudolph Greene turned down Annie Cannon's offer to pay off the remainder of the manse obligation. She called him to her house at the end of the season and expressed her interest in the project: "I'd like to see the debt on the manse paid off," she told Greene. "Do you think I should offer to the session to pay off what's left?" "No, ma'am, I don't think you should," he replied. "This is something we should do for ourselves." Greene later remembered that "she broke out in a big smile and gave me the biggest hug. And I don't believe the church was ever closer than when we were working on that project." The effort continued into 1962. By late summer, the entire note had been paid off and a grateful session held a ceremonial note-burning on the manse lawn.¹¹

During Brinkerhoff's pastorate another national trend caught up with Blowing Rock. He and the other ministers of the county had a hand in defusing a drive to exacerbate racial tensions in the mountain

community on the part of that old instrument of hate, the Ku Klux Klan. In late 1964 the short-lived independent local newspaper *The Blowing Rock Journal* carried an ad inviting anyone who was a "Native-Born Loyal United States Citizen, 18 years old, a White Gentile Person of Temperate Habits, of Protestant Faith, and believe[d] in White Supremacy and Americanism" to join "THE UNITED KLANS OF AMERICA, Inc., KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN," which organization, readers were assured, "is absolutely Non-Subversive with no criminal accusations against it." This was a way to "FIGHT COMMUNISM," which "is being taught in some of our Public Schools and Colleges" and had "infiltrated many key Government positions. . . . Even some of our preachers are including Communist ideas in their sermons," the ad proclaimed.¹²

In reply, Brinkerhoff sent the paper's editor an open letter, published under the heading "Why I Oppose the KKK." He provided some local details: "On Friday, three men approached some of the merchants of our community and individuals on Main Street soliciting membership" in a new "Klavern" of the Klan to be formed in Watauga County. "Letters were mailed to members of the community, and membership cards were passed out. . . . Indeed, many have become active members." Brinkerhoff reviewed for his readers the history of the Klan's early post-Civil War activity, concluding that by the end of that era "Responsible men began to turn away from violence." "Today," he observed, "there is no need for the Ku Klux Klan. Responsible citizens have declined to become members of it, and only people who feel inferior themselves, or are deeply frustrated, or ignorant of what they are getting into, become members of the Klan." Even if violence was no longer the hallmark of today's Klan, he said, "its purposes are the same as before: to intimidate people by fear"; and its "foundation principle [has not] changed - racial superiority." Further, its members, by hiding behind sheets and hoods and profaning "the name of Christ by using the lighted cross as their symbol," were showing a cowardly unwillingness to assume responsibility for their actions. Striking a patrician's tone toward the end of his letter, Brinkerhoff recalled that the "stern, moral" ex-Confederate General, Nathan Bedford Forrest, when he became head of the Klan in 1868, had "openly denounced the lawless elements of the organization and ordered that the Klan be disbanded. If the general were alive today and lived in Watauga County, I suspect that he would be indignant enough to chase the hooded cowards over Grandfather Mountain."

By the spring of 1965, Brinkerhoff helped mobilize the Watauga

County Ministerial Association into opposing the Klan. Its twenty members present at a meeting on April 5 unanimously resolved:

Because we believe that the relationship between the races in Watauga County is good, and that progress is steadily being made in communication and co-operation between our Negro and White communities; and Because we believe that this relationship can only be retarded by the establishment of a Klavern of the Ku Klux Klan, and other extremist groups; and Because we are unalterably opposed to communism but believe that the Ku Klux Klan is an ineffective way of fighting communism; and because as Christian ministers we feel that many of the principles, and the irresponsible actions of the Ku Klux Klan are contrary to the teachings of Christ, We hereby recommend that the citizens of Watauga County refrain from membership in the Ku Klux Klan.

Brinkerhoff carried a slight variant of this resolution to the next meeting of Holston Presbytery in Kingsport, Tennessee, which commended the Ministerial Association for its "clear, courageous, [and] forthright stand" and endorsed its action. The resolution was published in the digest of Presbytery's activities prepared for all member churches and thus was widely distributed and read to boards of elders and deacons throughout the region.¹³ The ecumenical effort against the Klan was largely successful; few open incidents marred race relations between Watauga County's whites and its almost non-existent black population during these years of turbulence on the national scene.

Rumple Church had already anticipated its own response if black worshippers sought to be seated in Rumple's congregation. In May, 1963, the session, noting that "racial demonstrations elsewhere" in the South "made it necessary to . . . discuss what our church should do in the event any group of colored people should visit us," had agreed that "any person or persons will be treated courteously, and should be seated without special recognition."¹⁴ No one today can recall any such incident ever taking place. Although the church today has no black members, its policy with respect to courteous treatment for all, so far as is known, has never changed.

The church had come a long way from sponsoring the late evening services for blacks during the 1930's and 1940's, through the "separate but (almost) equal" era of the Negro Community Church of the later 1940's to 1960's, to its present policy of open acceptance of all worshippers, of whatever race. And while race relations were the object of much anguish, individual heroism, and rapid rethinking throughout the denomination during the 1960's, the issue has lost its edge as an

object of controversy, since almost no blacks live in the county – and few, if any, summer residents bring servants, black or white, to the mountains any longer.¹⁵

The youthful Brinkerhoff faced another generational change during his pastorate as well: an alteration in the town's role as a tourist resort. By the early 1960's, many older members of the summer crowd were gone or passing away. A more sophisticated, more demanding group began to take their place in the community. For many years the "locals" had mingled freely with the summer people, both at the church and on the street; a mutual economic dependency had long existed, and a kind of personal respect had usually marked relations between the groups. When he or she needed a building contractor, an appliance, a repairman, a grocer, a gardener, or even a caddy or a groom for a horse, the summer resident had traditionally turned to some local resident, whom he or she was very likely to know personally. And, as has been shown above, when some "worthy cause" had needed support, the local leadership had for years been able to turn for help to concerned summer residents, whether to improve local sanitation, equip a hospital, raise money for an orphanage, or build a church plant. Presbyterians, indeed, had not been alone in this regard: Blowing Rock Baptists, Episcopalians, Methodists, even the few Roman Catholics and Christian Scientists, owed much, if not most, of their support to the summer residents.

But times were changing. First came skiing, a new sort of "service industry," bringing a different kind of weekend tourist to the mountains – and in winter! The area now known as Appalachian Ski Mountain was first promoted as Blowing Rock Ski Mountain, and its upper slopes were by the 1960's lined with new chalets in pseudo-Swiss style for sale to short-term vacationers. The "services" they demanded were increasingly provided by middlemen, or by local people they rarely knew. Better roads, and increased affluence, were also making it possible for a new type of visitor, with different demands, to make more frequent appearances in Blowing Rock. By this time the grand old hotels were fading, if indeed they had not already been pulled down: the Green Park was acquired by the Broyhill Furniture Company and was no longer much favored by the public; Mayview Manor was abandoned, stripped of its elegant rusticity, and would soon be

demolished for condominium development. Motels, a new national symbol of America on the move, accommodated the changed attitude toward travel: not the individuality and personal attention of a hotel and its dining room, but the anonymous and reassuring sameness of a private room and parking place, and a look-alike fast-food eatery, were all motorists seemed to want in the modern age. Blowing Rock, like many American communities, was fast becoming more a tourist stop for sightseers and less a summer resort for part-time residents.

But even for those who still wished to avail themselves of a mountain resort, the definition of "exclusivity" had also come to acquire a new and more literal meaning. Typical locally of the new approach to "resort living" was the development in the 1960's, near the no-longer extant town of Shulls Mills, of Hound Ears Club, with its for-members-only golf course, its restrictive lot sizes and building requirements, its exclusively upper middle-class clientele, and above all its gate house and gate guards. Such literal barriers symbolized the growing sense of difference between some local residents and the newer arrivals.

Many of the new resort residents there and elsewhere found they could get along just fine not associating in any personal way with the "natives," while local residents came to resent, with some part of their minds, the condescending treatment, and the unthinking display of wealth, which seemed typical of so many of the new outsiders. The new "exclusivity" began to work both ways. Yet the local community, too, was changing. Many young people had benefited from improved educational opportunities of the wartime and post-war period; they shared the rising expectations of an increasingly consumer-oriented secular culture. Some were moving away to "make it" in bigger and faster-growing cities in the piedmont or out of state. Those who stayed faced the perennial difficulty of earning an adequate living in a small, seasonal resort town. A split grew between the locals who could accommodate to, and profit from, the newer, more specialized service needs of tourism, and those who resented and feared the new climate.

Brinkerhoff hit upon two solutions, one personal, the other organizational, to deal with the effects these divisions were having upon his own charge. He has recently recalled that "on Saturday nights I would go over and shoot pool in their basements with my local elders, and on Sunday mornings get up and preach from the pulpit to my millionaires."¹⁶ He did, of course, more than this for both groups. Locally, he and his wife, young themselves, took strong support roles with many of the young couples in the church, and their small children. Jackie Brinkerhoff for a time had charge of the Dunn Youth work, arranging programs for the town's youth, finding volunteers to provide them hot

dog suppers in the church fellowship building (a function filled by the old manse after 1962), chaperoning them to summer camp, and similar functions. Blake Brinkerhoff helped organize a bowling league of church men, worked to revive and lead a Boy Scout troop, and in many other ways accommodated himself to his parishioners. He repeatedly inspired them to service, both at the church and in the larger community. During this era, the Sunday school secretary, Jay W. Greene, and his wife, Bernie, took the lead in extending the annual Christmas program of the Sunday school from a simple party for the children to what has since become an annual tradition of gift-giving, exchange of Christmas treats, and a visit from Santa Claus. Brinkerhoff helped ensure that the season's spirit was extended beyond the walls of the church, when, with members of the diaconate and the session, he had baskets of food collected at the service and distributed in the community to anyone who needed such a helping hand. This "White Christmas" tradition has continued to the present.¹⁷

The pastor on several occasions urged church officers to take more active roles: for a time the "Shepherd Plan" was tried, "whereby each officer . . . would be in charge of visiting and meeting the needs of approximately seven families" in the church. Session members were asked to impress the need for infant baptism upon parents in the church who had small children. The pastor visited regularly in Sunday school, explaining the meaning and function of the church to young people looking toward full membership. He held communicants' classes, and even led a vocational guidance class; for all these efforts he drew warm praise from the leadership.¹⁸

To minimize problems between the local and summer congregations, Brinkerhoff also took to heart St. Paul's injunction, "Let all things be done decently and in good order" (I Cor. 14:40), and gave form for the first time to a Summer Residents Committee. His hope was that accommodation could be reached between the disparate, sometimes mutually-suspicious groups in his charge. Brinkerhoff's most enthusiastic and sympathetic supporter in the new organization was Eugene S. Bowman of Mocksville. Bowman is the sort of man who never met a stranger. Long a resident of the Hershey, Pennsylvania area (both children and adults remember that for years at church he always had a pocketful of chocolate kisses which he loved to pass out when introducing himself), he and his wife, Ruth, bought a vacation house in Blowing Rock in 1960. After his retirement in 1964, they spent most of every summer on the mountain; they later also wintered in Florida. Bowman, as has been noted, immediately took an interest in the activities of the black Community Church. For eighteen years, until the congregation

had shrunk to a tiny handful, he preached there most every summer Sunday afternoon. It was a labor of love, for Bowman, a native Pennsylvanian who had cut his teeth on powerful Presbyterian preaching, was an enthusiastic, self-taught student of the Bible and of church doctrine and practice. He also took several turns teaching the men's and women's Sunday school class at Rumble during the summer.

With Brinkerhoff he found at least one immediate point of agreement: however attractive Rumble Church's appearance on the outside, its interior remained barnlike and unadorned (Keys would probably have agreed, but might have put it more gently). Indeed, except for the stone pulpit and flowerstands which had gone in when the church was built, and some English-style, electrified wall sconces, a plain communion table at the foot of the pulpit platform was the only interior decoration—although flowers and greenery often made up for the church's plainness on special occasions. Brinkerhoff and Bowman agreed that a set of table appointments would dignify and complement regular congregational worship. But while such a project was an initial point of departure for the cooperation of the two men, the larger need for a formal organization and procedure for channeling the support of the summer people was by the early 1960's glaringly apparent. The death of David Ovens in 1957 had removed one of the most dynamic, if occasionally controversial, supporters of the church's cause with the summer crowd. (Ovens's death also had, as will be shown in chapter six, an effect upon Grandfather Home Day.) It was time to draw together the remaining loyal supporters from the older generation, and forge a group which would carry on the work in unison with a new one.

With a glad hand and unquenchable enthusiasm, Bowman found some nine other men whom Brinkerhoff asked in September 1962 to form a "Special Planning Committee." The name was subsequently changed to the "Summer Residents Committee" (SRC), and membership quickly grew to eighteen, with a mailing list of more than 150. It was directed to familiarize summer residents with the church's activities, to welcome and assist in ministering to them, and to offer suggestions and help in planning for and achieving the church's long range goals. In 1967 the group adopted a formal set of by-laws. Along with Howard Walker and Bill Matson, Bowman was to be its leading spirit for twenty-one years, a term of service to Rumble Memorial almost as long as Ovens's—and one which, while not always perfectly harmonious, was certainly less disruptive to the church's pastoral and budgetary activity. For where Ovens and his friends of the previous generation had concentrated on local benevolence projects like Grandfather Home and a pastoral salary supplement, which had always been

"off budget" gifts, Bowman's committee raised funds for various improvement projects at the church, and channeled them through the church treasurer. Rumble's treasurer was in fact made treasurer of the SRC. The pastor was always invited to attend, and was kept informed of every committee action. This wise and farsighted arrangement has continued to this day.¹⁹

Funds raised by the SRC freed up locally-raised monies to go to support the larger mission of the church, whose long list of benevolences by the 1960's included presbytery, synod, and General Assembly causes, some designated for specific agencies or organizations, others for more general purposes such as church extension. Thus by the end of Brinkerhoff's pastorate a congregation slightly smaller in numbers than it had been at the end of Keys's was giving somewhat more to benevolences.

Meanwhile the projects of the SRC had an effect on the church's appearance and the congregation's comfort. A simple brass cross and candlestands were purchased for the communion table. New electric lanterns were hung over the seating area, providing additional illumination and complementing the increasingly English country-church look of the sanctuary.²⁰ Pew cushions were purchased shortly after. And in May 1963, William W. Matson of the Summer Residents Committee appeared before the session to report "on plans for heating the stone sanctuary. The plans were wholeheartedly adopted, along with other attendant minor specifications."²¹ That summer a whole new heating system, and additional ductwork, was put in place. For the first time in fifty years, a satisfactory means of heating the building had been found. In 1987 local and summer resident contributors replaced that furnace. And although the smaller number of wintertime worshippers still makes it too expensive and impractical to use the main building after Thanksgiving or before Easter, fall and spring services in the stone sanctuary have been considerably more comfortable since the 1963 work.

Through the years the SRC's gifts have proved enormously beneficial to the life of Rumble Church. In a February 1978 letter to Concord Presbytery, Bowman estimated that up to that date the committee's "total gifts to Rumble Church were in excess of \$180,000," an amount which included some \$100,000 from various individuals toward the Cannon Educational Building between 1965 and 1971. The total has grown considerably larger since then. In 1974 the committee purchased and later had paved a lot for parking at the rear of the church. Its gifts have made possible a long list of other refurbishing and maintenance projects, without which the physical plant would inevitably

have fallen into serious disrepair: refinishing the ceiling, beams, and pews in the sanctuary; building new sidewalks; rebuilding the stone pulpit platform; replacing (more than once) the aisle carpeting; stripping and repainting the wood siding on the chapel wing; and several times making repairs to the slate roof. Some jobs the committee did with their own hands: a group spent several days one summer stuffing insulating material between the rocks in the sanctuary walls. The organ currently in use in the stone sanctuary was largely paid for by SRC donations. Summer resident Anne (Mrs. Thomas V.) Snively, Sr., to augment the seasonal music program, subsidizes individual members of the Farm House Restaurant Singers each summer to join with the Rumble choir. Her support, which began during Brinkerhoff's time, has added much to the summer services; it continues today.²²

During the 1980's such projects as a vestibule for the chapel, and re-roofing the Cannon Educational Building, have continued to find SRC support. Many other mundane but necessary items, such as duplicating machinery, folding chairs and tables, and choir robes, have been acquired through SRC contributions. Simply put, proper upkeep at Rumble Church, without the continued help of the summer people, would be an almost impossible burden to the permanent congregation. And because the projects have been coordinated through the church treasurer and the session, the process Brinkerhoff began has worked reasonably well to allay unwarranted interference, or resentment, between the two groups.

But just as important as the material benefits which the SRC has made to Rumble Church has been the spirit in which their work was led. In his own often-eloquent but idiosyncratic style, Bowman tried in 1978 to put into words something of that spirit:²³

You and I know that many things in human life bring joy; from the sense of a healthy body and the exhilaration of a sunshiny day . . . to the deep satisfaction of home and summer friends in the mountains, there ARE numberless sources of happiness. But man has always been athirst to find joy in thinking about the TOTAL meaning in life. I feel that, if when he thinks about God, he can, like the psalmist, rejoice in the future ahead of him, then all his other blessings ARE illuminated. Truly, not only are there happy things in life, but LIFE ITSELF, is, fundamentally blessed. For me, it seems that the thought of God in terms of friendly personality is the most joyful idea of him that man has ever had. Isn't man's thirst for joy one of the sources for his faith IN a personal God? Isn't this what man wants, what the Apostle Paul called "joy

and peace in believing"? And in DOING? So, let all . . . believe,
AND DO!

Other organizational matters which were attended to during Brinkerhoff's pastorate included a changeover to the rotation system for deacons, beginning in late 1961. One-third of the board was replaced that year and each year thereafter, each new "class" serving a three year term. It is not clear from the records why the church did not apply the rotation plan at the same time to the members of the session; a system of rotation for elders, with one being replaced each year, was agreed to in 1969. This system was followed until 1977, when the church adopted the "unicameral" system of church government, in effect abolishing the diaconate by combining its responsibilities with those of the session of elders.²⁴ Brinkerhoff also for the first time organized several standing committees to more formally involve laypersons in the life and service of the church: a Committee on Strengthening the Church, on Service, on Witness, and on Commitment.

During his last year in Blowing Rock, Brinkerhoff set in motion the plans which would culminate, under his successor, in a new Sunday school building. Annie Cannon had entered her decline. She was in and out of the hospital in Blowing Rock for several months during late 1964 and early 1965. Her will, written long before, provided for Rumble if the executor-members of her family concurred. Brinkerhoff and others in the congregation kept close to her, not only for the sake of the church's future, but in gratitude for all she had already done. Brinkerhoff remembers that, although he did not always share some of her more conservative theological views, they had a deep mutual respect and shared a genuine desire to serve the same Savior. Her death, on March 10, 1965, removed one of the last links to Rumble Memorial's past. She had been born December 9, 1887, the same year as the Blowing Rock church; she had loved and taught generations of its young people; and, along with her family and many others whom she had touched, she provided for a lasting monument after her, both for the work she had done for others and for her Lord.

Brinkerhoff conducted her funeral service. "Wednesday, March 10, 1965, was Easter Morn for Mrs. Annie L. Cannon," he told a crowded church. "This was the day she had achieved her victory." Her friend Nell Greene wrote in *The Blowing Rocket* the following week:²⁵ "Although Mrs. Cannon lived a full, rich life for the Lord, her problems, as well as her joys, were numerous. But her problems were shared with a higher power that made them easier to bear. . . . Perhaps the most fitting tribute paid to Mrs. Cannon was the anthem sung by the choir

at the close of her committal service. The anthem was sung at the close of each Sunday morning scene-o-felt presentation for more years than anyone can remember by the children she loved:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace."

Brinkerhoff turned Rumble Church over to his lay committees in January, 1966, after having accepted a call to the Highland Presbyterian Church in Daytona Beach, Florida. Several preachers filled in over that winter, among them the academic dean and professor of Bible at Lees-McRae, Dr. Robert G. Newman, who in this period also supplied the pulpit at the Baird's Creek Church. But Rumble's regular operations: the Sunday school, the Men and the Women of the Church, the Dunn Youth, and others, ran on smoothly. Considerable responsibility fell upon the clerk of session, Rudolph Greene, and elder Bob Hardin, hardware store owner and mayor of Blowing Rock from 1953 to 1971, who moderated the session meetings that winter. The lay training the preceding pastors had provided was being put to the test, and succeeded. But unfortunately for Rumble's more recent experience, serious trouble lay ahead. As the sage of Proverbs knew, "pride goeth before a fall." The church as a whole had much to be proud of by the mid-1960's, and more would be accomplished during the next several years. But both the strengths and the shortcomings of the generation the church had raised up by this era would leave a legacy with which the current crop of leaders still has to contend.

When he left, Brinkerhoff wrote that Rumble Memorial was a "most unique" church that "provides fine year-round opportunity for building leadership" because of its "tremendous outreach in the spring, summer, and fall" to a summer congregation containing "college presidents, vacationing ministers, townspeople, and visitors from all over the nation. Also, a very welcome characteristic of this church is its unity." He and the session in late December 1965 carefully filled out a "Church Data Form" for the Assembly's Committee on the Minister and His Work, to assist in the search process for a new pastor. As a benchmark for comparison with earlier and later summaries of the church's condition, it should be cited in some detail.²⁶

In 1965 the church employed a full-time pastor, at an annual salary of \$4800, plus a \$600 car allowance and another \$600 utility allowance. It contributed on the pastor's behalf to the Minister's Annuity Fund, and provided a rent-free manse and a month's paid vacation. Others on the staff included a choir director (that year a young graduate student in music at Appalachian State Teachers' College, Tom Forrest), at \$700 a year; an organist, Margaret Vance, at \$480; a janitor, at \$500; and a Dunn Youth Worker, at \$300. Nine men made up the session; their average age was fifty-five. On average they attended eighty percent of the session meetings, and ninety-five percent of the worship services. The nine-man board of deacons averaged thirty-eight years of age, attended ninety percent of their meetings, and came to church ninety percent of the time.

Of 139 active members on the roll, an average of ninety attended services in the winter; attendance in summer was estimated to average 215. Sunday evening services were no longer held, but eight to twelve persons attended a mid-week Prayer and Study Service. "Many" of the members were under age twenty, or age twenty to sixty; "few" were over sixty. Of the occupational listings given on the form, "many" were reported in the business, clerical, laborer, professional, and retired categories, "few" were farmers. A total of 117 persons were enrolled in Sunday school, sixty of whom were under age eighteen; forty-six adults, nine teachers, and two officers were indicated. Sixty women, and thirty men, were active in their respective church organizations. The church conducted Vacation Bible School, communicants' classes, church workers' conferences, and "occasionally" held a leadership training school. It hosted Scouting programs for boys and girls under twelve, and youth organizations for "Pioneers" and "Seniors." Its budget, which in 1965 totaled \$13,079, was jointly prepared by the elders and deacons, and raised by "pledges and gifts"; an estimated fifteen percent of the membership tithed.

All its buildings, valued at a total of \$75,000, were free of debt, in "good" repair, and insured for near their estimated value. The religious education building, which dated to 1936, was considered inadequate for "present and future needs," however. The new manse was equipped "in all essentials"; parking around the church was "fair"; a volunteer choir of fifteen, an organ in "good" condition, and "sufficient pianos" for the educational plant completed the music program. The congregation sang from *The Hymnbook*.

As for the character of the community in which the church was located, Blowing Rock was described on the form as a "Tourist" town, with "small businesses and tourist attractions" making up its leading

industries and occupations. Its winter population was 700, the summer population, 6,000; ninety percent was estimated to be native-born white, 9.5 percent "foreign-born," and one-half percent "Negro." The townspeople's religious affiliations were put at eighty percent Protestant, five percent Roman Catholic, three percent Jewish, and twelve percent "Unchurched."

Rumple Church claimed as a "special emphasis" its "ministry to tourists and summer community; special summer residents committee composed of leaders from many churches in [the] Southland." It had added five new members on profession of faith, six on transfer of membership, and two on restatement of faith in 1965. And it indicated its members were "cordial to visitors and prospective members, effective in assimilation of new members," welcomed members from various economic levels, and cooperated in all denominational programs.

From this base of success, then, the congregation began its search for a replacement minister. During early 1966 two other pulpit candidates were considered before the congregation decided on May 29, at a meeting moderated by the Rev. L. B. Gibbs, executive secretary of Holston Presbytery, to call the Rev. James Richard Holshouser, then pastor of Acme Presbyterian Church at Riegelwood, North Carolina. The new pastor was provided an annual salary of \$6500, of which \$500 was to be considered manse expense, and \$1000 as car expense; plus the now-standard contributions to the Ministerial Annuity Fund, group health insurance, and a month's paid vacation. The nominating committee introduced him to the congregation in its report as a native of Mooresville, North Carolina, a Davidson graduate, class of 1956, and a 1960 Union Seminary graduate. Holshouser had "studied for a year at a Seminary in [Montpellier,] France as an Exchange Student," and had been ordained in Wilmington Presbytery on July 31, 1960. Married to Sadie Rebecca Rigler, the new pastor and his wife had three children, Natalie, then five, Laura, three, and Andrew, two and a half months old.²⁷ The Holshouser name, of course, was a familiar one in the community, but the new minister was only distantly related to the local Holshouser family.

Richard Holshouser had been involved in denominational activities for much of his life. Even before college, he had been a leader at Presbyterian young people's conferences, and presided over the Youth Council of Concord Presbytery during his senior year of high school. He first gained experience at money-raising for worthy causes when he led the Youth Council's campaign to buy a Jeep for Presbytery's Camp Grier during 1953.²⁸ A major achievement of Holshouser's time at Rumple Church would be to head up the raising of more than \$143,000, from all

sources, for the Annie L. Cannon Memorial Education Building. It remains the most lasting physical legacy of his ministry to the church and the community.

In an interview during 1987, Holshouser, who currently pastors at two churches, Clinchfield and Conley Memorial, near Marion, recalled his years at Rumble by identifying people with whom he worked, and who served the church with him during that period. But his first thoughts upon taking the job, he remembered, were of the young people of the congregation and the town of Blowing Rock. It was to the service of this group that he directed a large share of his energy. The Dunn Youth stepped up activities, led by Ginger Smith and Susie Greene, during the summers. So did the Scouts. Holshouser took student groups to summer camps in Holston and later Concord Presbyteries. Buses carried youth groups to Charlotte, to visit various interdenominational outreach programs among that city's homeless and drug-dependent. All these activities brought increased numbers of young people into contact with Rumble Church. In their interest, Holshouser focused the session's attention on the inadequacy of the church's physical plant. When the new manse had been completed, some seven years previously, the old one had been remodeled as a fellowship hall, but it could not begin to accommodate the growing number of groups needing meeting space. The lower floor of the 1936 building lacked adequate lighting and ventilation (it has since been renovated by volunteer labor with Dunn Youth and other funds from the Summer Residents Committee, and one of its rooms furnished with attractive antiques and dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Ethel Burns). For two or three years, the church arranged to lease the American Legion building for its youth activities.

Meanwhile, the legacy to the church from Annie Cannon's estate, provided by her daughter, Mary Morris of Greensboro, and granddaughter, Anne Reynolds Forsyth, was drawing bank interest. Elder Howard P. Holshouser, as chairman of the building committee appointed under the previous pastor, had solicited various members and friends of the Cannon family, and had had sketches prepared for an addition somewhat smaller than the one which finally took shape. Estimates in 1965 put project costs at about \$75,000, of which some \$43,000 was on hand as of September, 1966. The new pastor continued to promote the project; planning moved ahead more rapidly—and became more elaborate. The architectural firm of Malcolm and Higgins, of Charlotte, was engaged in early 1967 to design a larger, three-story building. The new plans allocated space for several spacious rooms for men's, women's, and young people's Sunday school classes; a

fellowship hall and kitchen; and a room for pre-schoolers, which would soon come to house a weekday "Good News" nursery school. The structure was designed to wrap around the south end of the winter chapel building, allowing for a new choir loft and elevated pulpit area there. It connected to the stone church as well, providing a unified plant for the first time. A new heating system served both the new wing and the old chapel, but not the stone sanctuary. The old manse was to be demolished.

Consideration was given to facing the new building in stone, to match the existing sanctuary, but the idea had to be dropped as prohibitively expensive. As Holshouser recalled it, the necessary rock work would have cost as much as \$100,000. Pointed arches on the exterior porch, facing the street, and a beige tone of brick, supposed to harmonize with the slate roof then on the stone sanctuary, were the only concessions to the country gothic style of the building to which the new wing was to be attached. Its flat roof was perhaps its most unfortunate feature, both from an aesthetic and practical standpoint: had the architect considered the problem of snow build-up, as did the amateurs who had designed the original stone church? Within three years the new building had to be re-roofed to stop leaks, while its energy inefficiencies became a problem when the cost of fuel oil soared after the 1973 crisis in the Middle East. Still, the plant's utility has made it a substantial asset both to the church and to the community.²⁹

As it was, the only bid made on the project in late 1968, for \$184,500, far exceeded the session's expectations. Rather than take that bid to the congregation, acceptable means of financing what had become a much more expensive undertaking than initially supposed had to be explored. After some months the congregation approved a plan to issue \$120,000 in 6% bonds, but later voted to accept a conventional twenty-year loan for that amount, secured by the church property. Work began in spring 1969 by the Wilkie Construction Company of Lenoir, at a contract price of \$178,000. A handsome eight-page brochure was printed to lay the plans before the resident and summer membership.³⁰

The whole town watched the building take shape, in pictures printed in *The Blowing Rocket* at frequent intervals over the next two years. The paper also carried regular notices of the fundraising bake sales, bazaars, and ham suppers (one of which, in August, 1969, drew more than four hundred people) sponsored all through 1969 and 1970 by the Men and the Women of the Church. On Sunday, August 16, 1970, in an impressive dedication service, the Rev. Holshouser led the con-

gregation in a "Litany for the Church" which concluded with a prayer "for God's blessing on the Church in this place:

Here may the faithful find salvation, and the careless be awakened. Here may the doubting find faith, and the anxious be encouraged. Here may the tempted find help, . . . and the sorrowful comfort. Here may the weary find rest, and the strong be renewed. Here may the aged find consolation, and the young be inspired.³¹

After a sermon by the pastor, "Led Forth in Joy," on a text from Luke 24:44-53, several members of the congregation took part in the dedicatory: Owen Coffey, most recent chairman of the building committee, presented the keys to the building; Rudolph Greene, clerk of session, accepted them. Wayne Craig and Gail Lentz spoke on "the hope of the youth," and Mrs. Everett Widener, president of the Women of the Church, expressed that organization's gratitude. Then a "Litany of Dedication" committed both the building and congregation "to continue the vision and sacrifice of Christ's servants in our midst who have taught the Word of God in years gone by" and to "the broadening of spiritual horizons and the deepening of Christian trust, that young and old may be awakened, enlightened, and strengthened." After giving thanks "for those in our community, in our nation, and throughout the world who depend on our committed efforts," the litany also thanked God "for the numerous and far-reaching bonds with gentle, persevering Christians throughout many states who fill this church with their presence, love, and prayers during every season of the year." It was a fitting acknowledgment of the union which bound winter and summer residents in a common worship of the same Lord. Then "after they had sung an hymn ['O Zion Haste, Thy Mission High Fulfilling'], they departed."³²

But the project was not over. Holshouser and the session continued to urge upon the congregation the need to pay off the building mortgage early. In November 1970, summer resident Marian (Mrs. William) Nebel offered anonymously to match contributions to the building fund by June 1, 1971, up to \$45,000.³³ This generosity inspired increased efforts, beginning at a Christmas season Love Feast, to pay off the remaining obligation, some \$90,000, during the next several months. Another round of bake sales and suppers followed, as did behind-the-scenes prayers, and solicitations from summer residents. An "Expect a Miracle" fellowship supper was scheduled during the spring of 1971, to tally up the receipts of the previous six months and to seek redoubled giving from all present. Holshouser recalled that when the count was completed, the total was \$4500 short of the

amount needed to pay off the whole mortgage. At that point, Opal (Mrs. C. A.) Lynch, a summer resident, a Roman Catholic, who had attended the supper in the company of John Miles and Caroline Abernethy of Newton and who was interested in youth work in Blowing Rock, asked the preacher if she could give the amount in the memory of her late husband, who had been a Presbyterian. With that gift, the "miracle" had occurred.³⁴

Not all gifts were so large, of course, but many were sacrificial. Later that same evening, Holshouser took two plates from the supper to a local couple whose families had long had ties to the church. Holshouser recalled that they gave him a \$50 bill that night, to help defray the expenses of the dinner. Later a church member commented that, considering the record of hardship, sickness expense, and low levels of income in that family, such a gift was perhaps equal to \$1000 from someone else.

And so a major milestone had been passed. To Holshouser, and to many year-round residents, the new educational wing was a sign of the increased independence and responsibility of the local congregation. In just over two years, more than half the cost of the building had been raised locally, or at least on local initiative. The generosity of many in the summer congregation had been very important: Marian Nebel's challenge gift was the largest single benefaction the church had ever received at one time. But a few other members of the Summer Residents Committee were critical of the considerable investment the building represented. Had the church relied only on the summer residents, the project might have continued to languish many years. Once the educational building was completed, the session next authorized some \$20,000 worth of repairs to the stone sanctuary and the purchase and paving of a lot for parking at the church's rear. Most of the funds came from summer residents, but the often-outspoken Holshouser made clear that the church session was the final decision-making body on all local matters. Having convinced themselves of the need, the pastor and the lay leadership were together displaying the confidence, and independent decision-making, which marked a community coming of age.

Another milestone of the Holshouser era was reached in July 1969, when the Presbyterian churches of Watauga County rejoined the Pres-

bytery of Concord and the Synod of North Carolina. The Synod of Appalachia had been created in the Tufts era. A new network of ties had since strengthened the county's connections to its home state and had considerably lessened its dependency upon the inter-mountain structures which Tufts's generation had created to serve what had been perceived as a common cultural unit. Ironically, the break with the Synod of Appalachia came at about the same time the federal government was rediscovering Appalachia, and increasing amounts of attention and tax dollars were being funneled, mostly through the Appalachian Regional Commission, into the area. Church links were being cut just as political ones were being created.

The idea of returning to Concord Presbytery, as has been shown above, had first been broached almost fifteen years before, and was now thoroughly restudied by Holshouser and at several joint meetings of elders and deacons. The proposal reached a formal petition stage again in October 1968, when a congregational meeting voted 49-2, with six abstentions, to ask for the transfer. The initiative may be seen as part of a general move then underway throughout the denomination to restructure presbytery and synod boundaries.³⁵ Locally, it was linked to the concern of both the Boone and Blowing Rock churches to minister more effectively to Presbyterians in the county who, if not fulltime local residents, were from North Carolina. Two groups were singled out for mention: the students at Appalachian State University in Boone, numbering some 5500 by the late 1960's, and the tourists and summer residents of Blowing Rock. Both groups' ties were predominantly within the state; neither Holston Presbytery nor the Synod of Appalachia was making any special effort to reach them. Other significant factors supporting the move, according to the petition, were the work and commuting patterns of Rumble's membership, and the difficulties of travel within Holston Presbytery. Blowing Rock itself, since it straddled the line between Watauga and Caldwell Counties, was "surrounded on three sides by the boundary of Concord Presbytery." A chart appended to the petition showed that the farthest point in Concord Presbytery was only 115 miles by road from the town, while a corresponding point in Holston was 170 miles distant. The church "had only happy relationships" with its previous home presbytery, and did not intend by its request, it said, to complain or criticize; it simply felt isolated from the majority of Holston's "fine work. . . . The fast-growing cities and suburban areas of east Tennessee are properly known best by elders and ministers of Tennessee," the petition concluded.

After several procedural delays, which included having to hold an

extra congregational meeting at the Baird's Creek Church to meet fully the letter of the *Book of Church Order*,³⁶ the three churches in Watauga County were officially dismissed to the Synod of North Carolina in July, 1969. Nothing perceptible happened locally. As in the past, the relationship between Rumble Church and Grandfather Home continued. Receipts from the annual August collections now were channeled through Concord, rather than Holston Presbytery; both had been supporting the Home since the birth of the Synod of Appalachia in 1915. Rumble Memorial was indeed now within easier commuting distance of centers in Concord rather than Holston Presbytery; and in the controversies which would come to disturb the church during the next decade, the new connection meant that the court to which the delicate matters regarding Holshouser's successor would be referred would be made up of more locally-accessible representatives. For by an unhappy twist, the new connection had its first test when outside authorities had to be drawn in to adjudge matters on which the church would soon become deeply divided.

Notes for Chapter Five

1. RMPC Session Records, pp. 39-42.
2. Clipping from *The Blowing Rocket*, n.d., in "This Is Your Life" Scrapbook.
3. Oral interviews with Perry Lentz and Rudolph Greene, December 1986; RMPC Sunday Bulletin, September 28, 1958, in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. 1. Grove's daughter, Jean Chater, and her husband, Bill, are current members of RMPC; as of 1987 she served as secretary of the Watauga County Hunger Coalition in Boone, while Bill taught the Couples' Sunday school class and sang in the choir.
4. RMPC Sunday Bulletin, December 8, 1957, reprinting sermon of November 10, 1957, in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. 1.
5. Letter, Dunn to Martin, September 26, 1913, W. J. Martin Papers, Davidson College Archives; and information from Chalmers G. Davidson. See also "Robert A. Dunn Dies After Brief Illness," *Charlotte Observer*, February 22, 1945, p. 1. I am grateful to summer resident Jim Love of Mount Holly for this reference and for information about the Dunn house and property. For terms of the Dunn legacy: 1970 Yearbook, RMPC.
6. Trouble also again plagued the heating system: in December "the offer of Geo. Sudderth, Jr., to look after furnaces was accepted. . . ." RMPC Session Records, Book 2, pp. 56-57; and General Assembly Statistical Reports for 1958, 1959.
7. RMPC Session Records, meeting of May 27, 1959.
8. Copy of portion of RMPC church bulletin, fall 1959, exact date unknown. As Holston Presbytery met in Blowing Rock that fall, the Rev. Dr. E. T. Thompson, Moderator of the General Assembly that year, mentioned as preaching "next week," would have been present in that connection. Others on the list Keys gave who have not previously been noted in this account include: three North Carolina governors (Hoey, Broughton, and Hodges), a president of Davidson College (the Rev. Dr. John R. Cunningham), a well-known Christian author and professor at Columbia Theological Seminary (the Rev. Dr. Manford George Gutzke) and a Union Theological Seminary president (the Rev. Dr. James A. Jones).
9. RMPC Session Records, Book 2, pp. 63, 192.
10. "Rumple Memorial Presbyterians Pay Off New Manse Building Debt," *The Blowing Rocket*, August 25, 1962; clipping in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I. Searcy was a co-founder of the Waldensian Bakeries in Valdese and had a summer home in Mayview: information from Perry Lentz and Rudolph Greene.
11. Oral interview with Rudolph Greene, December 1986. See also RMPC Session Records, Book 2, pp. 57-95, *passim*.
12. Advertisement, *The Blowing Rock Journal*, no date, copy of clipping kindly supplied the author by the Rev. Brinkerhoff.

13. "Resolution," undated newspaper clipping; Digest of Meeting of Holston Presbytery, First Church, Kingsport, April 6, 1965, copies of each supplied by Brinkerhoff.

14. RMPC Session Records, Book 2, p. 108.

15. See, for example, Thompson, *Presbyterians*, III, 538-551. In 1964, the PCUS's Directory of Worship was amended to make "unmistakably clear" the position that "No one shall be excluded from participation in public worship in the Lord's house on the grounds of race, color, or class"; *ibid.*, p. 549.

16. Oral interview with Brinkerhoff, July 1987.

17. Jay Greene later served eighteen years as superintendent of the Sunday school, for nine years as deacon, and twelve years on the session. At his death in 1981, members of his family, and friends, at the urging of his niece, Gail Ford, and nephew, Terry Lentz, established a memorial fund in his name, the income of which still supports this annual event at the Sunday school. Information supplied by Bernie Greene.

18. RMPC Session Records, pp. 106, 112, 117, 122.

19. See folder, "Summer Residents Committee," RMPC records files. Beginning in early 1962, the church treasurer's job fell to Everett Widener, who, with a committee of deacons, thoroughly overhauled the church's budgetary procedures and, probably for the first time in Rumble's history, had the church books audited. Widener was followed as treasurer by deacon Bob Hardin when he was elected elder in late 1963.

20. Until at least the mid-1930's, the original "great old chandeliers with their dozens of lamps" still hung in the church; these were apparently not suitable for electrification, or had already been disposed of by the 1960's. "Little Stone Presbyterian Church At Blowing Rock Attracts Visitors," *Watauga Democrat*, June 1, 1933, p. 3.

21. RMPC Session Records, Book 2, p. 111.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

23. Letter, Bowman to the Rev. Perry Mobley, February 25, 1978. Other information in this section from oral interview with Bowman, January 1987.

24. RMPC Session Records, Book 3 [1965-1976]. Congregational meeting of April 27, 1969; the congregation rejected a proposal to adopt the unicameral system in 1971: *ibid.*, congregational meeting of September 19. See chapter below for more on this issue.

25. Nell Greene, "She Was God's Great Lady," *The Blowing Rocket*, undated clipping in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I.

26. Church Data Form, December 13, 1965, 5-pp., RMPC Session Records, Book 3.

27. RMPC Session Records, "Report of Nominating Committee," Congregational Meeting of May 29, 1966.

28. McGeachy, *Confronted*, p. 573. McGeachy noted the unusually large numbers of young people involved during the mid-1950's in Concord Presbytery's youth activities who later entered the ministry or other full-time Christian work. Included in that number were Gregory M. Grana, who served on the Youth Council in 1954, also attended Davidson College, and was "ordained by Concord [Presbytery], July 26, 1964, upon his appointment as an overseas missionary to the Congo (now Zaire). Family illness, while he was in language school in Belgium forced his return home and he was employed by the Board of World Missions." *Ibid.*, p. 574. Grana and his family have been residents of Blowing Rock and active in various ways at Rumble Church since 1985.

29. Holshouser recalled in 1987 that during the building campaign a summer resident approached him, quite irate that the building would not match the original stone sanctuary very well. But upon being informed of the costs involved, he gave a generous donation anyway. Oral interview with the Rev. Richard Holshouser, Old Fort, N.C., September 1987.

30. RMPC, Scrapbook, Volume I.

31. RMPC service bulletin, "The Service of Dedication for The Annie Ludlow Cannon Memorial Education Building," August 16, 1969, in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I.

32. *Ibid.* The bulletin also acknowledged Owen Coffey, who had "freely given many long hours in the planning and carrying-through of decisions"; the summer residents (it noted that "each month of the entire year is increasingly filled with the coming and going of so many who are truly a part of us"); the architect, John Higgins; and the construction supervisor for the Wilkie Construction Co., Joe Dobbins. A member of the building committee was the late Cecil Rhodes, who died during the years of construction. A carpenter, Rhodes was severely injured during a fall at a building site at Hound Ears and died a few weeks later. He had been superintendent of the Sunday school and an enthusiastic promoter of the new building. Oral interview with the Rev. Holshouser, September 1987.

33. The Women's Sunday school classroom was named in Mrs. Nebel's honor as a tribute to her generosity. Marian Nebel was the second wife of the late William Nebel, a German immigrant early in the twentieth century, whose fortune had been made in the hosiery business in Charlotte. The Nebels were also benefactors of Lees-McRae College: a residence hall there is named for them. A longtime summer resident of Blowing Rock, Mrs. Nebel as of 1987 still spent much of each year at her summer home on Chestnut Drive and attended services at Rumble.

34. See several press clippings from *The Blowing Rocket* and the *Lenoir News-Topic* in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I.

35. "A Petition from Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church, Blowing Rock, N.C. to Holston Presbytery, Synod of Appalachia and a Study of Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church's Relation to Holston and Concord Presbyteries," 5 pp., n.d., in RMPC Records; see p. 1 for a series of brief excerpts from General Assembly Minutes back to 1960 concerning the issue of realignment and restructuring court boundaries. Some of these denomination-wide restruc-

turing efforts came as part of the growing movement toward reunion with the Northern Presbyterians: Thompson, *Presbyterians*, III, 522-582.

36. Minutes of Holston Presbytery, Adjourned Spring Meeting, April 12, 1969, p. 126; and Stated Summer Meeting, July 18-19, 1969, p. 3. Holshouser served for over a year as temporary supply pastor at Baird's Creek during this period. He oversaw improvements in its physical plant and growth in its congregational membership. Since 1971 its pastor has been the Rev. Spears Alexander, whose wife, Joyce, is principal of the Blowing Rock Elementary School, and an active member of the Boone Presbyterian Church.

6

Shocks and Signs, 1973-1987

RICHARD HOLSHOUSER and his family enjoyed, and still enjoy, Blowing Rock. During his time at Rumble he bought property not far from town and some years later built a year-round house which the family still uses for summer vacations and occasional days in the high country. He intends it for a retirement home. But when in 1972 he suggested to the session that he vacate the manse and receive an allowance for living in a home of his own, the idea was turned down. Session memories were too fresh of local efforts which had been put into building the barely ten-year-old, church-owned house on Wallingford Street. He encountered resistance as well to a suggestion that the church adopt the unicameral system of government, then being instituted at many smaller churches in the denomination. Consolidating the board of deacons with the session of ruling elders was rejected by a congregational vote in September 1971.¹ In 1972 the minister was voted what amounted to a \$200 raise for 1973, from \$6800 (\$800 of which was a child allowance) to \$7000 (with no such allowance).² Another \$350 salary raise was voted for 1973.

During seven years, the number of church members had grown considerably, but a review of the rolls in 1972 identified some forty-five persons who had attended no function, or made any financial contribution, in a year. As the church newspaper "Slate and Stone" put it, "Even with this very easy standard, from the approximately 240 members on roll there are 195 active members. Various inactive members do not attend or give at all because they say they have been offended by the minister, the officers, or other members." The paper invited inactive members to "Come to study Jesus in Sunday School and worship God. Instead of letting your soul be eaten up by insult, come join other believers who continue to praise God for all his mercies to us."³

Still, the issue of inactivity had apparently become serious. Some of the summer people had also shown a lessened interest during the last year of Holshouser's pastorate.⁴ Holshouser himself recalls that he had begun to feel he had done all he could do—and he had done a lot—in Blowing Rock by the summer of 1973.

In July, he asked a congregational meeting to dissolve his pastoral relation with the church. On a vote of 49 to 13, his request was granted. Two members with long ties to the church, Sarah Payne and elder Bob Hardin, expressed the congregation's appreciation to the Holshouser family for their years at Rumble, and their personal regret at his departure. Holshouser received a standing ovation at the end of the meeting. But unlike the mood at the previous minister's departure, this time the congregation seemed less certain how to proceed. The session had to decide afresh whether to continue with a number of the church's programs and ways of doing things: Rudolph Greene, again clerk of session, found it necessary to take votes on whether the church secretary, Mary Shore, should continue, and continue to put out the newsletter, "Slate and Stone," which had begun under Holshouser; whether a covered dish supper would continue monthly; and whether Jean Bolick, now church treasurer, should pick up the mail (the session answered all these questions affirmatively). Likewise the chairman of the pulpit committee, Jim O'Dell, had to ask all members of the session and diaconate to "list what they considered to be the goals of our church," and reported that presbytery had requested the Rev. J. K. Parker, Jr., of the Boone church, to work with Rumble in securing a new pastor.⁵

Among the guest preachers who filled in that summer and fall was the Rev. Dr. Ellison Smyth, of Blacksburg, Virginia, who had retired in 1968 after more than thirty years of service in churches throughout the middle South, and whose father-in-law, the Rev. Dr. Charles G. Vardell, had so often preached at Rumble in the years before his death in 1958.⁶ Several others, including the Rev. Lynn Brown, also assisted on occasion. Not until April of the following year did O'Dell bring to the session, and then to the congregation, the name of "the only minister to date that the entire Pulpit Committee had agreed would be able to serve our church," the Rev. Mr. Francis C. Collier.⁷

Collier was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. Fifty-three years old when he arrived in Blowing Rock that summer, he and his wife, Dorothy Jean, had three sons. Educated at the University of Edinburgh, where he had received the Master's degree in 1943, Collier had spent some years in British military service, and had taught in Siam: he wrote a commentary for teachers on five plays of Shakespeare, in English and

Siamese, published in 1959, and a book of English lessons for Siamese children, published in 1960 and 1961. Rumple's was his first pastorate after completing a Master of Divinity degree from Union Seminary in 1974. He was ordained on July 14 of that year, in a service held at Blowing Rock.⁸

Session minutes covering the Collier years at Rumple, 1974-1978, are lengthier than for any previous pastorate. Indeed, together they run to about half as many pages as the minutes for all previous meetings since a session was organized in 1913. They reflect not only the growing complexity of the church's many concerns, but also a level of tension, which seemed high almost from the start. Matters substantial and trivial came up for session consideration; a few issues obviously divided the new pastor from some elders quite early on. Steeped in the Scottish Presbyterian tradition, Collier delighted some with his brogue, and his thoughtful, learned sermons. His pastoral counseling style and faithful visitations in homes and hospitals drew appreciative comment from many. He observed holy days with "high church" dignity, reflecting what was perhaps a part of his British heritage and a growing denominational trend. But some felt the new pastor's approach to worship departed too much from Rumple's traditions. Soon after his arrival he urged the session to order monthly, instead of quarterly, observance of the Lord's Supper; the session tabled the matter for months, agreed to give it a trial over the winter of 1974-5, then voted to drop it. Collier persisted, holding out for greater ceremonial meaning at worship. In 1975, "it was determined to hold celebrations of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper quarterly on the old quarter days of Candlemas (February), Whitsunday (May), Lammas (August), and Martinmas (November), with additional celebrations at Christmas and Easter, etc." This attempt to reproduce the pattern of the Scottish church year might well have accorded with the wishes of some summer residents as well, as it would allow the sacrament to be celebrated with a larger of their number. The old dates were nevertheless quietly restored upon Collier's departure.⁹

Another uncomfortable situation was created when the new pastor took offense at the appearance in the parish of his predecessor, to whom many in the congregation still felt attached. The session had earlier given Holshouser approval to perform a wedding in the stone sanctuary, and to baptize in a private ceremony a baby born to a member couple. Collier focused on these infractions of the *Book of Church Order*, brought them forcefully to the attention of the session, and threatened to raise the issue at presbytery if such practices did not cease. He seemed impervious to arguments that, in the first instance,

the marriage in question was to occur before he himself had been installed, or even ordained; and that the private baptism had been canceled, once all parties realized the request was impermissible. Vigorous, even pedantic, in his conduct of session meetings, Collier thereafter felt it necessary to open each meeting not only with the usual prayer and Scripture lesson but with a reading from the *Book of Church Order* as well. He began keeping the minutes himself, having them signed after the fact by the clerk.¹⁰

Difficulty, probably unrelated to the new pastor, who clearly wished its success, also soon arose with the music program. Organist "Miss Margaret" Vance had died in November 1972, after having played faithfully for more than thirty years. Holshouser conducted her funeral service. He recalls that during 1970, while the chapel was undergoing renovation and it was necessary to meet all winter in the stone sanctuary, he personally drove "Miss Margaret" from her home to the church in his four-wheel drive car and helped her wrap up in blankets in the choir loft; but she had never missed a service.¹¹ A memorial concert was presented in December 1972 by the new church organist, Darrell Blake, and the choir room in the new educational building was dedicated to her memory. But the choir director, Faye Parker, soon resigned, and Blake himself departed shortly after. An unhappy pattern was developing. Since 1972, a succession of organists and choir directors have come and gone at Rumple Memorial, and debates over their pay and their duties have chronically occupied the session. One factor in this pattern may have been that, since Margaret Vance had played virtually for free for years (her salary during her last years was \$10 per Sunday), a session accustomed to getting such services so cheaply, for so long, has ever since had difficulty accepting the need to pay professional wages to professional musicians.¹²

Yet the church has always wanted a music program. In 1977 it purchased a new Allen digital computer synthesized organ for the winter chapel: the fundraising committee was headed by Bernice Keppel, widow of Dr. Alvin C. Keppel, president of Catawba College, 1942-63, and the organ was dedicated in memory of nineteen year-old Marian Coffey, daughter of members Mr. and Mrs. Owen Coffey, killed in an automobile collision in May 1977.¹³ But problems with the music program have complicated the responsibilities of every pastor for the last fifteen years, and Collier was no exception.

Thus, while most of the church's activities in the community continued, and Collier received warm support from many, grievances accumulated. The minister's own perceived brusqueness and tenacity sometimes made communication difficult and led to behind-the-scenes

dissatisfaction. Perhaps too much local pride led to intolerance. Eccentricities of dress (his tam o'shanter cap was a familiar sight around town, and he loved to don a kilt for ceremonial occasions) seemed harmless enough at first, but became to some objects of silly gossip. Ministers in small towns can have no secrets; even the behavior of their families reflects directly upon their good intentions. So while many were prepared to go a certain distance with him and with his family, no limit was set beforehand, making Collier's job harder. By the summer of 1976, the nation's bicentennial year (Blowing Rock made much of the festivities), several members of the session had taken offense at one thing or another and were no longer attending meetings.

Budget discussions in the board of deacons that autumn were difficult. The pastor wanted the church to increase its benevolent giving and at the same time grant him a cost of living raise as recommended by presbytery, from \$13,475 to \$14,280. The deacons' draft budget provided for both, but a majority of session members present at a November meeting refused to go along. Their own budget proposal, involving no pastoral pay increase and a reduced level of benevolences, was thoroughly discussed at a congregational meeting in mid-November. The complexities of procedure under the *Book of Church Order* confused and frustrated many church members. Unless the elders recommended it, no budget could be voted on by the congregation; yet many members clearly favored the original budget proposed by the deacons. And as the treasurer reported from the floor, a surplus in the previous year's budget made both increases possible. By late in the year, three members of Concord Presbytery's Commission on the Minister, two pastors and a lay elder, had to be called in as observers to the budget making process. The congregation, by secret ballot, rejected the elders' budget, 38-20. In January, a revised budget proposal, granting the minister's raise and modestly increasing benevolences, passed the session and was adopted by the congregation in February.¹⁴

But by now Collier had, at great cost to the peace of the church, also taken up the cause of unicameral church government, which the congregation had rejected only six years before. He was warned that his desire to reduce the number of officers by combining the deacons and elders into a single board might lead to more friction. He defended himself by saying the move "was not intended to hurt anyone," but the church had "not enough qualified, willing men to fill 18 officer posts." The congregation met on February 20, one week after final passage of the budget, to elect officers—elders and deacons—under the regular

rotation plan. But Collier ruled that since elections was the general topic of the meeting, the issue of a unicameral system could be discussed before voting. Here he probably thought he had the majority of the congregation's support: a petition had earlier been circulated asking the session to consider the new system and allow the congregation to vote on the matter. Discussion at the meeting revealed that only three elders now made up the session. The other six had resigned or were refusing to serve. None of the three wanted a unicameral system. Opponents of the new system refused even to serve on a proposed "working group" to consider the matter further. The meeting broke up without result. It again became necessary to appeal to presbytery for advice.

In April a committee to consider unicameral government was elected at a congregational meeting. All summer the committee met, weekly with few exceptions, interviewing all parties concerned and getting advice from presbytery representatives. By September, their report was ready. Mailed to every member, it advocated the one-board system, and proposed an election and rotation plan which would permit open nominations at a congregational meeting for the first unicameral session (of nine members) to be elected. A "broadly representative" nominating committee elected by the congregation would thereafter propose names annually to replace members rotating off the session, with other nominations taken from the congregation. All current officeholders were to resign, but were eligible for re-election. A congregational meeting on September 25, moderated by the Rev. Clements E. Lamberth, Jr. representing Concord Presbytery, after many questions were raised and answered, adopted the new plan, by secret ballot, but by the slim majority of 36-25. So although the issue had been formally resolved, divisions had been revealed which were not to be easily overcome.

That October, Concord Presbytery granted special administrative powers to its Commission on the Minister, to deal with the continuing problems at Rumble Church. By January 1, 1978, a new session had been elected, ordained, and installed, but the church was not yet out of the woods. Through the winter, despite frequent visits from a committee representing the presbytery's commission, and even as the new officers were receiving training sessions in their spiritual and organizational duties, and the entire congregation was being assigned to "task groups" to encourage lay involvement, tensions persisted. On March 19, the commission issued a three-page, single-spaced report, saying it had found the church's difficulties "numerous and complex" and a hindrance to Rumble's "potential for bearing a strong and effec-

tive witness to Jesus Christ in the community of which it is a part." It ordered both the pastor and the session to change their behavior: Collier was to participate in a "clinical pastoral education program," while the session was to "cease the divisive practice of holding private meetings which exclude some members of the session in order to discuss and make decisions on matters to be brought before session." Further, the church roll was to be carefully scrutinized for inactive members and purged, to end disputes as to who really made up the membership.¹⁵

Division now was open. One contingent in the congregation clearly resented outside interference, whether by presbytery or by some summer residents, who on arriving that spring, expressed their desire to continue an active role but sided with Collier in all disputes. Some old-timers sniped at the new governance system; one of the recently-elected session members resigned. Relative newcomers to the community who had had little previous experience with the Presbyterian system of government, or with local politics, were drawn into service on various task groups, but not much was accomplished. Attendance at worship services dropped. The pastor himself asked to be excused from a congregational meeting called to pick the nominating committee for new officers for the coming year.¹⁶ In short, all the problems of "group dynamics" were being acted out.

The crisis broke late that summer. At an emotional meeting on September 7, attended by two presbytery representatives and the entire session, absent the member who had resigned, three alternatives were discussed at length:

1. decide that we were capable of solving the problem and able of putting the answer into effect,
2. that we felt it was impossible for us to solve the problem and we ask the Commission to make the decision for us,
3. ask for a Congregational Meeting and ask the congregation to ask Presbytery to remove Frank [Collier].

The session voted 8-1 for a motion "that we accept defeat and ask Presbytery (or the Commission) to solve our problem, with our help, and that this be brought up at their meeting on Sept. 12." After a few reminders of upcoming events, the meeting adjourned with prayer around the circle.¹⁷

Three weeks later, after the commission had met at presbytery and had a further interview with Collier, the minister announced to the session his intention to resign. "He explained that he felt that his leav-

ing was not going to solve all . . . problems but some they would and it would create other problems. He urged both sides to use his going not as added trouble but a way to the first step of making peace. . . ."¹⁸

And, slowly, peace was restored. The commission presented to the church its five possible options to bring resolution to its work: dissolving the church altogether, assuming jurisdiction in the name of the presbytery, asking all elders to resign, elders and congregation dissolving their relationship, or working through the current session to solve the problems. Session urged the commission to choose the last option, but promised to accept whatever decision the commission reached.¹⁹ On October 17, the full commission dissolved Collier's pastoral relationship with the church, effective October 31, and had him vacate the manse at the end of November. He was to be paid by Rumble Church through the end of the year, having already accrued a month's paid vacation. And the commission continued its oversight of the church, naming the Rev. James N. Murray interim moderator of the session. It discussed assuming original jurisdiction over the church, but declined in light of the session's plea to be allowed to work with the commission.²⁰ Neither the session nor the pastor appealed this decision.

A hard case had been settled in an unhappy way; blame enough could be apportioned all around. And although many church programs—the Dunn Youth, the Summer Residents' Committee, the music program, and others—remained in place, they, too, had suffered from the lack of leadership, the uncertainty and the infighting. As from a rock thrown in a pond, the ripples created by the Collier case have taken a long time to die down.

Just over a month later, Rumble had a new pastor living in the manse—and another one visiting him most weekends. The Rev. David Rice Holt II was assigned by presbytery as interim pastor in November 1978, and his call was confirmed by Rumble Church. He served until September 1979, at a monthly salary of \$1000 plus the usual pension contributions and allowances. His new wife, the Rev. Daisy Glenn Holt, (they had been married the previous March in Atlanta, each for the second time), was completing her studies at Columbia Theological Seminary, and so commuted much of the time back and forth to Atlanta. Holt, fifty-three, was the son of a Presbyterian pas-

tor, a World War II veteran, and a graduate of the University of Florida and Union Seminary. He had held churches in the Virginias and in Missouri before coming to Blowing Rock.²¹

Holt's call was for an indefinite period, but as his salary was stated in monthly figures, it was clear his time would not be long. It passed quickly. Officer elections, held just before his arrival in November, saw two (out of three) new elders chosen who had been nominated from the floor rather than by the nominating committee – a sign, perhaps, of the congregation's lingering suspicion of the unicameral system and its procedures. Still, the relative harmony on that occasion was a blessing for which the session could be grateful. By May, the Commission on the Minister reported the church no longer needed its supervision; "some [session members] felt we had no problems, others felt we had problems but were able to work these problems out."²²

In July the session made recommendations for a new, five-member pulpit search committee: "in order to have every aspect of the church represented," one elder, one member each of the Men and Women of the Church, and two at-large members would be chosen by a congregational meeting. Such a committee was duly nominated and elected on July 22, 1979, balanced not only among the different groups but among old and new members. At the same meeting a nominating committee for choosing candidates for elder was also elected by acclamation: remarkable unanimity, considering the church's recent storms.²³ By December, the pulpit committee had its candidate to fill the pastorate, the Rev. Vaughn Earl Hartsell, forty-five, a native of Spartanburg, South Carolina. A graduate of Mississippi College and of Union Seminary, his most recent church had been in Mullens, West Virginia, where he had preached for ten years. Clerk of Session Mary Shore wrote to all members of the congregation:²⁴

He is very strong on stewardship and benevolences. His personal approach and style as a pastor is "a pastor to my flock." The purpose and nature and his practice of preaching is "I believe that preaching exists for the proclamation of the mighty acts of God, not for the propagating of views, opinions and deals. Preaching is to tell the story that in Jesus Christ, God came into human history, took flesh, and dwelt among us. I preach as 'a dying man to dying men.' 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. . . .' (Matt. 11:28) are words of our Lord that I think need to be repeated often to His people. I attempt to do this in my preaching. . . . I try to preach according to the Scottish recipe: remember your own sins and preach against them to the congregation. For most people, life is hard and only in Jesus

can one find the peace that passeth all understanding. We do not know what the future holds but we do know that He holds the future."

Hartsell was called as pastor by unanimous vote of the congregation on January 6, 1980. With his wife, Elaine, and their three children, Rand, Molly, and Paige, he arrived in Blowing Rock that winter and settled in to a manse which had been somewhat neglected during the pastorates of his predecessors (improvements in the manse he had made a condition for accepting the church's call). The session felt reassured that his salary and benefits, \$12,410, plus a \$2,000 travel allowance and insurance and annuity payments, were actually several hundred dollars below what it had been paying Collier during his last year. A major rebuilding job lay ahead. The organist and choir director positions were again vacant: the most recent choir director had resigned in December, citing "irreconcilable problems . . . and hostilities" among choir members; no one headed the Men of the Church; the church no longer had a secretary; the session had recently voted to have two treasurers, one for receipts and one for disbursements, but one of those jobs was still vacant; the Sunday school needed teachers; lingering uncertainty pervaded the SRC; and the Dunn Youth was having problems getting other local churches to cooperate with its planned activities.²⁵ Hartsell's talents were thus almost immediately tested. But he found his task invigorating. Equally as fond of the town and region as any of his predecessors, in a remarkably short time Hartsell made himself knowledgeable about the community, the congregation, and the town's permanent and summer resident families.

Hartsell's personal style is cheerful and friendly—his familiar whistle announces his arrival just about everywhere he goes—as well as warm and enthusiastic. Yet for all his lightheartedness, he has his earnest and serious side. His carefully prepared prayers from the pulpit are often moving and eloquent; his visitations have also helped bring comfort to many facing despair, or encountering the last enemy, death. But to be "all things to all men," as St. Paul said, is for any Blowing Rock minister a daunting challenge. His reception by the SRC, chaired since 1985 by Charlotte native Henry Neely, was especially supportive.²⁶ That organization's members have continued in recent years to underwrite improvement to the church's physical plant, including providing new carpeting in the stone sanctuary and in the Keys Chapel, a new sidewalk and path lights, and a vestibule for the chapel. Stained glass windows in the vestibule, depicting the old and new official seals of the Presbyterian Church, were donated in 1986 by

the family of local architect and "transplant" church member Jack Moberg, who designed the structure, and who died of cancer in late 1986 at the age of 37.

Hartsell also quickly learned about other church traditions. He recalls that during his first year, when something was said at a session meeting about "Grandfather Home Sunday," he had no idea of the importance of that long-standing but unique event on the church's calendar. He turned the occasion over to the session and took a vacation—and no special service took place at all that year. The situation was remedied the next summer.

The last appearance of operatic stars at those occasions, which had been sponsored since Ovens's death by Robert and Mariam Hayes of Concord, Banner Elk, and Blowing Rock, had taken place in 1966. New staff members at the Home and at the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association then apparently decided that the Home's children, not outside musicians, should highlight the service. For several years thereafter, young people from the Home themselves conducted the August programs. But in 1971 and 1972, the Rev. Holshouser personally arranged once again for appearances of visiting artists: in 1971, Ruth Robertson, a contralto who had toured extensively from her home in Hollywood, California, where she often soloed with the First Presbyterian Church, sang as part of a regular worship service; and in 1972, the "Singing Sheppards," a husband-and-wife duet from Kentucky, presented two programs of widely varied sacred music at both a Sunday worship service and an evening concert on the preceding Friday. By 1975, during Collier's years, the concert approach had been revived, and since that time the Farm House Singers, under the direction of Shirley Blackwell, have given afternoon concerts, usually to a packed church. Several of this group of college students from all over the Southeast, who are brought to Blowing Rock each summer to wait tables at the Farm House Restaurant and are trained as soloists and as a chorus, have gone on to careers as professional musicians. For the past three years, at Hartsell's suggestion, the pulpit on Grandfather Home Sunday morning has been filled by Dr. Bradford L. Crain, president of Lees-McRae College—so that the long ties between Tufts's work in Banner Elk and Blowing Rock continue to be emphasized. "Grandfather Home Sunday," then, while no longer drawing the revenues of earlier years, continued under Hartsell as a tradition of joyful musical celebration and service.²⁷

Hartsell started two other important annual events which in updated ways helped bring Rumble back to its historic roots. Beginning in 1981, he arranged an annual July "preaching mission" at the church,

inviting well known Presbyterian minister-authors and teachers of the Word to lead in study, worship, and outreach. Somewhere in this generation the Church had lost its way; old-fashioned revivals became an anachronism to many who have soured on a diet of television evangelism and emotional gospel hucksterism. But the historic truths of the faith have never lost their power to convict, to edify, to persuade, and to build up believers in the body of Christ. The thoughtful, often powerful messages conveyed during these preaching missions have shown that the word "evangelism" must not be dropped entirely from the church's vocabulary.

In 1981, the Rev. Dr. I. Howard Chadwick, a native of Winston-Salem, director of the Outreach Foundation of the Presbyterian Church, who had preached for several years at the Westminster Church in Charlotte, delivered five sermons on the theme "Eternal Questions for Contemporary People." The 1982 addresses, on the subject "The Spiritual Renewal," were given by the late Rev. Dr. William A. Benfield, Jr., a 1936 Davidson College graduate, former faculty member at Louisville Seminary, and long a distinguished minister in the Church; in 1970 he had been Moderator of the General Assembly. In 1983, and again in 1985, the Rev. Dr. George M. Docherty, author of a well-received autobiography, *I've Seen the Day*, and minister emeritus of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church of Washington, D.C., where he succeeded the Rev. Peter Marshall, held the services. The speaker in 1984, the late Rev. Dr. Kenneth G. Phifer, a distinguished preacher and widely-published theologian, addressed sermons to the topic, "It's easy to say. . . ." The 1986 services were led by the Rev. Dr. Ernest T. Campbell, former senior minister at The Riverside Church in New York and professor of worship and preaching at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois, and a nationally-known preacher, who addressed the subject of the gospel's personal and social dimensions. During the centennial summer, the speaker was the Rev. Dr. J. Randolph Taylor, PhD., a Davidson graduate, class of 1951, president of San Francisco Theological Seminary and previously pastor at Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, Church of the Pilgrims in Washington, D.C., and Central Presbyterian Church in Atlanta. Dr. Taylor had been chosen the first Moderator of the General Assembly of the newly-reunited Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 1983.²⁸

With the session's endorsement, Hartsell also instituted an annual "Rumple Sunday" each June, a service which had the potential to take the place of the old-time "Homecoming" or "Rally Day" Sunday of a previous generation. To these services have been invited guest

preachers who, through family or school ties, have reason to know about and to celebrate with the congregation the legacy of the work of Jethro Rumble, the causes with which he was associated, and the faith of which he was so vigorous a spokesman. They follow, too, in the tradition of Vance, Vardell, and other powerful preachers of earlier generations who had often so ably filled Rumble's pulpit in the summers. The 1987 celebration of "Rumble's Hundredth" also owed a great deal to Hartsell's energy and dedication, as well as to an active lay committee whose hard work and "broadly representative" composition augured well for the church's approach to future problems.

Recruiting experienced lay leadership, as at many small churches, remained difficult, however. Rumble's congregation is still diverse: the church continues to attract a wide variety of worshippers in summer, but must count on a much smaller corps of the faithful over the winter. Many, though by no means all, of the year-round membership can trace family connections at the church back for several generations. The inevitable disenchantments resulting from the turmoil of the 1970's have taken their toll on older members, and even on younger members of old families whose historic ties to Rumble Church have been frayed or broken. Nearly half the present membership has joined the church since 1980; many have quickly been given roles in the church's programs and in the active committee structure which is a legacy of the "task groups" formed during the Collier controversy. In some cases the enthusiasm and energy of these new leaders has benefitted the church; in others, their inexperience has sometimes led to false starts, or bruised feelings. The numbers attending Sunday school have dropped. Blowing Rock's population, like that of the nation, seems to be aging, as many young people have moved away and retired or semi-retired have arrived to take their places. But both membership and giving at the church have continued to grow. The church rolls reflected a sharp drop in membership at first, from 225 reported members in 1980 to 109 in 1981, as over one hundred inactive names were removed that year, but by the end of 1986, membership had increased to 158. During Hartsell's time the church's budget has risen from about \$36,000 in 1980 to some \$95,500 in 1987. Benevolent giving has also increased as a proportional share of the budget. The church has recently pledged a substantial contribution over the next three years to the expansion campaign currently underway at Lees-McRae, thereby continuing another custom of its founders.

But the work of hands and heart, as much as gifts of money, displays true service to the Master's cause. A recent, unique memorial to a long-time member, Alice Frye Lentz, may be seen as an expression of the

kind of gratitude which has developed locally for the work of Rumble Memorial: the Women of the Church, Circle two, in 1984 fashioned a funeral pall, decorated with fine needlework, and used for the first time at Mrs. Lentz's funeral service. Displayed at a church reception shortly afterward, the pall is available for any member's use, and is lovingly stored by her daughter, current Sunday school superintendent Bernie Greene.²⁹ In short, at its one hundredth anniversary, Rumble Memorial maintained its traditional witness and had carried much of its best heritage into a changing world.

Rumble Church celebrated its centennial over twelve Sundays in the summer of 1987. Each service was an occasion of pride and satisfaction; each was designed as a rededication to the aims of its founders a century ago, who were, as we have seen, determined to build "For His Cause A Little House" and for His continued service. The events of that summer deserve to be recorded as a tribute to the pastor, the Rev. Vaughn Earl Hartsell, the special Centennial Committee which handled many of the arrangements, the choir, the membership, regular and seasonal, and the many notable guest participants who led or shared in the regular and special activities of the summer. It was a time of fellowship luncheons and receptions on the church lawn, of prayer, praise, music, and preaching. Only time will tell the extent to which the "handful of corn" sown anew on the mountaintop will ripen to maturity.

"Rumble Sunday," on June 14, marked the first appearance in Rumble's pulpit of the Rev. Dr. John W. Kuykendall, president of Davidson College and member of its class of 1959. Long articles in *The Blowing Rocket* the preceding and following Fridays highlighted Dr. Rumble's career, and described the entire service; the church bulletin for that day has been reproduced elsewhere in this volume.³⁰ When the Rev. Dr. L. B. Gibbs, former executive secretary of the Presbytery of Holston, presented Dr. Kuykendall with a rare copy of the so-called "breeches Bible" of the fifteenth century for the Davidson College Library, the service became in another and unexpected way a reminder of the links which have so long bound the church to its founder and the college, as well as of the congregation's long ties to the former Synod of Appalachia, and the Reformed tradition's high regard for the vernacular Scriptures. For the Rev. Hartsell, Gibbs's appearance on the

podium also held a more personal meaning: Dr. Gibbs, "Uncle Pete," is the uncle of his wife, Elaine. The Bible had been given anonymously in Hartsell's honor to Dr. Gibbs for presentation to the college.

Dr. Kuykendall's sermon that day, "A Sense of Place and a Sense of Purpose," developed a text in Joshua 4:1-9: the congregation was reminded that for them, as for the people of Israel, stones had been raised at God's command; they are to be a memorial forever to God's mighty acts, so that "when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?" they will have an answer.

Other participants in the service included the former governor of North Carolina, Blowing Rock native James E. Holshouser, Jr., who had been baptized at Rumble Church in 1935 and whose family had long been active Presbyterians in the county. Greetings to the congregation from the current governor, James G. Martin, like his predecessor a Presbyterian and a Davidson graduate, were read by Mary Smith, clerk of session.

Special music composed for the "Rumble Sunday" service by choir director Noël Lovelace also bore a personal dedication to Hartsell, and to the choir Lovelace had been directing for some five years. The relationship between the Hartsells and the Lovelaces, and between the choir and their director (Marion Lovelace had been church organist for the years her husband directed the choir) had been close for some time. Few in the congregation that Sunday knew the Lovelaces' resignation had already been given. All too many churches underpay their music professionals, despite the demands and expectations they place upon them; Rumble Church has been no exception. Hartsell and several members of the choir had made the case for a ten percent salary raise to the Lovelaces for 1987, but the session imposed provisos for granting it which, from the Lovelaces' perspective, would have taken more time than they could give to the job.³¹ Later that summer, Lovelace resigned as well from his job as director of choral activities at Appalachian State University and took a full time position at a large church—with a large budget—in Charlotte, Myers Park Baptist. His installation there was attended by several of his friends from Blowing Rock; for them the occasion was bittersweet, but it marked a substantial professional advancement for the highly talented composer-director, nephew of the noted sacred music composer Austin C. Lovelace.

For the rest of the centennial summer, substitute organist Suzanne Dettbarn, and choir directors Amanda Klutz and Charlie Lentz, all of whom had local or church family ties, successfully filled in the music

program. In the autumn of 1987 Rumble secured a new music team: to lead the choir, David Gaston, band director at Hardin Park School in Boone for twelve years and an accomplished flutist; and as organist, Jimmy Dettbarn, a promising student of that instrument, and a member of a musical family of local note.

On June 21 of that centennial summer, the Rev. Dr. John M. Handley, general presbyter of the Presbytery of Concord, delivered the sermon. A native of Richmond, Handley was also a graduate of Davidson, class of 1955, and of Union Seminary. His D.Min. was from the McCormick Theological Seminary of Chicago. On the staff of Concord Presbytery since 1974, Handley was well known to many in the congregation.

The following Sunday Dr. A. P. Perkinson, Jr., president of St. Andrews Presbyterian College and a 1955 Davidson alumnus, delivered the sermon. Dr. Perkinson's presence was a reminder of the many years during which the Rev. Dr. Charles G. Vardell, founder and first president of Flora Macdonald College, a predecessor school to St. Andrews, had regularly appeared in the Rumble pulpit. Then on July 5, the Rev. J. Allan Smyth, Rumble's great-grandson and Vardell's grandson, preached from the spot where his great-grandfather, grandfather, and father had stood in former years. Smyth, a Davidson graduate, class of 1959, is current pastor of the Hopewell Presbyterian Church in Huntersville. His family still maintains its ties in Blowing Rock. Each year they open the summer home Vardell built on Chestnut Hill, and numerous Rumble-Vardell-Martin descendants visit. One of Smyth's sons is named after his great-grandfather Vardell.³² Smyth's sermon attracted perhaps the largest number of any preacher's during the centennial.

Two of the special services also highlighted other parts of the church's summer program: the preaching mission and Grandfather Home Sunday. The Rev. Dr. J. Randolph Taylor, president of San Francisco Theological Seminary, mentioned above, delivered the message on July 12, remaining in town to lead services on each of the following three evenings. He was present to assist in the dedication of a handsome new sign for the churchyard, given that summer by Libba Boyd, in memory of her late husband J. Reed Boyd, who had long been active at the Myers Park Church in Charlotte, and at Rumble Memorial following the couple's retirement to the mountains. Dr. Bradford L. Crain, president of Lees-McRae College, spoke on Grandfather Home Sunday, August 9. Also present that day was Margaret Tufts Neal of Banner Elk, author of *And Set Aglow a Sacred Flame, A History of the*

Edgar Tufts Memorial Association, a book which has helped to keep alive the memory of her father's work.

Three former pastors of the church also returned to greet old friends in the congregation, reminisce a bit from the pulpit, and call on the church to renew its Christian commitment. The Rev. David Holt, interim minister in 1979, now retired and living in Nashville, preached on July 19. He and his wife, Daisy, who accompanied him, were warmly received. On August 2, the Rev. Blake Brinkerhoff and his family came over from the summer home they maintain at Montreat to deliver the sermon and join the membership at a well-attended luncheon. Since leaving Rumble, Brinkerhoff has been minister at the Highlands Presbyterian Church in Daytona Beach, Florida. On August 23, it was the turn of the Rev. J. Richard Holshouser, minister at Clinchfield and Conley Memorial churches near Marion since leaving Rumble in 1973, and his wife, Rebecca, to be welcomed back by many members and friends in the community.

Another who led in worship, on August 16, was the Rev. Dr. Daniel Patrick McGeachy, Davidson class of 1951 (and nephew of longtime pastor and Concord Presbytery historian Neill Patrick McGeachy), now minister of the Downtown Presbyterian Church of Nashville, Tennessee. That congregation's historic building once housed the First Presbyterian Church, formerly the Rev. Dr. James I. Vance's parish. McGeachy's service was certainly the most unusual of the summer: he not only preached but, accompanying himself on the guitar, sang his message of faith, hope, and love. He had the whole congregation joining him.

The last guest speaker in the pulpit that summer was the Rev. Dr. John D. MacLeod, Jr., general secretary of the Synod of North Carolina, and a nominee, although not elected, for Moderator of the General Assembly of the PCUSA during 1987. Dr. MacLeod was a 1942 graduate of Davidson College. He extended greetings from the rest of the state's Presbyterians, who had only in 1969 welcomed the congregation back into the fellowship from which it had originally grown.

The Rev. Hartsell, who led in worship each Sunday but who preached only once, took the opportunity on July 26 to deliver a centennial sermon of his own entitled, "Our Memory is our Life." Citing places in the Bible where God commanded His people to remember Him and His acts, and reading what amounted to a roll of the saints of the church in former days, Hartsell pointed out the need for present members to keep alive the memory of their own forebears at Rumble, and to recall their own dependence upon the remembered truths of the faith.

And so the circle had come complete: Rumble's parishioners had been reminded of their history, and of their eternal faith, by many of the denomination's present leaders, three of their former ministers, three Presbyterian college presidents and a seminary president, and their own minister. They could now turn to look forward to another century of service for their Lord and for His cause in Blowing Rock.

By the 1980's, Blowing Rock has come to display many of the characteristics of small towns throughout its region and the nation. It profited from the renewed ecological concerns of the post-*Silent Spring* era and the back-to-the-earth movement of the 1970's: many new residents moved in, preferring the rural life of the exurbs, although total year-round population has not increased much. A few who arrived have also since departed, as better job opportunities "off the mountain" have become available. Like many places in the country, Blowing Rock is more than ever a town of people on the move. Some of the new arrivals brought with them sophisticated tastes and city ways which have had many local repercussions: from Art in the Park, dinner theaters, and craft shops, to gourmet restaurants, Blowing Rock can now offer residents and visitors alike a variety of diversions quite unexpected a generation ago.

The town also has experienced a "gentrification" unknown even in its earlier heyday as a resort. Property prices have skyrocketed, some buildings have gone up in haste whose designers, one hopes, are repenting at leisure, and town services have become strained—and expensive. The successful recent refurbishing of the Green Park Inn is a good example of the way the town can hang on to its heritage while meeting modern needs. The condominium craze, which, among its other manifestations, strewed the grounds of the old Chetola estate with clumps of uninspired "multi-unit" dwellings, is a less fortunate recent innovation. Numbers of Blowing Rock's native sons and daughters still are forced to leave the town and region to find remunerative jobs. New highways—the four-laned U.S. 321 to Boone a few years ago (the "James E. Holshouser, Jr., Memorial Highway"), the completed Blue Ridge Parkway during the church's centennial summer—bring ever more traffic and parking problems to the little mountain community. Many local Presbyterians continue to take their civic responsibilities seriously: they run for local office, volunteer for the fire

department and rescue squad, participate in civic and fraternal service organizations. Yet it seems difficult, in an age of increasing centralization and bureaucratic regulation, to channel "progress" in coherent ways. The Rev. Earnest, reminiscing in the summer of 1987 about his days in Blowing Rock thirty-five years ago, recalled pulling his children on a sled from the church to the post office and back on snowy winter days, never seeing a car. Blowing Rock in the 1960's experienced the unwelcome phenomenon of becoming the only social outlet for thousands of Appalachian State University students, so that its streets were full all winter. But by the mid 1980's, when strict enforcement of alcohol and noise laws led most of the student-oriented establishments to close their doors, and Boone opened its own alcohol outlets, some in Blowing Rock had reason to regret the loss of revenues—even if it became less expensive to police the town and pay for trash pickup. The public voted in liquor by the drink in 1986.

Yet for all its recent changes, Blowing Rock has remained a pleasant town in which to live. Its zoning restrictions, and concern for uptown beautification, have prevented the decay of its Main Street. New neighborhoods of attractive, landscaped homes, tucked away on winding roads, open onto the spectacular views for which the town has always been justly famous. Improved access to Boone has drawn Appalachian State University faculty and employees, attracted by the town's quiet and culture, into the community as permanent residents. Fewer problems plague its schools; greater opportunities for neighborliness still exist to retain new residents. Blowing Rock has never been the isolated backwater which has stereotypically and incorrectly described many Appalachian mountain communities. And in its midst, for one hundred years, Presbyterians have come and gone, witnessing the town's changes, and taking part in all of them.

A classic sermon illustration has it that the Church is both an organization and an organism. As an organization, it all too frequently betrays the imperfect, human characteristics of its collective membership. Presbyterians have always advocated a system of elected, representative government which, at ever higher levels, can help to correct errors of judgment, and provide opportunities for appeal and guidance. Many at Rumble Church and throughout the nation have rejoiced at the reunion of Southern Presbyterians with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., effected in 1983 after years of debate and compromise, which has restored partial unity and enlarged the witness of at least one arm of the Christian body on earth. Yet no serious claim need be made that this is the only practical, much less Scriptural, or even Reformed, church structure.³³ For the church is also an organism: it is called the

“Body of Christ” and its Head is therefore its eternal and risen Lord. It belongs, according to Christian doctrine, to Christ and is, like Him, alive, and ever renewed. As a community of believers, it exists to display joyful and visible evidence of the saving power of the grace of God to its own members, its community, and the world at large. The Holy Spirit is its only true enabler and comforter. What has been accomplished at Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church in Blowing Rock, therefore, through one hundred years, is, like all things human, imperfect, partial, and mortal. But the faith the church has maintained in the community is the work of its Head. That faith, believers know, will one day be perfect, as He is.

Notes for Chapter Six

1. RMPC Session Records, meeting of June 5, 1972, and congregational meeting of September 19, 1971.
2. *Ibid.*, congregational meeting of November 28, 1971.
3. "Slate and Stone," September 1972, file at RMPC. The church paper consisted in this period of eight to twelve legal-size mimeographed sheets. Its major writer-editor-printer-distributor was Mary Shore, now Mary Smith, then church secretary and secretary at the Blowing Rock School. Active at the church since her childhood, the faithful and cheerful Smith has held more positions at the church than anyone can remember (including herself). She was clerk of session as of summer 1987.
4. Letter, Bowman to Mobley, September 25, 1978, in RMPC files.
5. RMPC Session Records, meeting of August 29, 1973.
6. Smyth graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1925 and from Union Seminary in 1930. He and his wife, Mary Linda Vardell, whom he married in 1937, have three children, Susan, Ellison Adger, Jr., and another Presbyterian preacher, the Rev. James Allan Smyth, a 1959 Davidson graduate who holds the B.D. degree from Union Seminary, the D.Min. degree from McCormick Seminary: *Ministerial Directory*, 1983 edition. For Vardell's death at age 98, see *New York Times*, Sunday, May 4, 1958, p. 89, and *Charlotte Observer*, same date, p. 5D. Members of the family donated RMPC's fourth stained-glass window in the stone sanctuary, a depiction of the Ascendant Christ, shortly after Dr. Vardell's death.
7. RMPC Session Records, meeting of April 9, and congregational meeting of April 21, 1974.
8. *Ministerial Directory*, 1975 edition. Collier also taught in Thailand and Sudan. For a time in 1966 and 1967 he taught school in Virginia Beach, Virginia, after emigrating to the United States. Assisting at Collier's ordination and installation were, among others, the Rev. Dr. Fred R. Stair, president of Union Seminary: RMPC Service bulletin, July 14, 1974, and "Rumple To Welcome New Pastor On Sunday," *The Blowing Rocket*, May 17, 1974, clipping in RMPC Scrapbook, Vol. I.
9. WOC History, 1975, at Historical Foundation, Montreat.
10. RMPC Session Records, meetings of June 17 and July 18, 1974. Nothing in the *Book of Church Order* requires that the minutes be physically written by the clerk, only that he (or more recently, she) "record the transactions [of session meetings] and preserve the records." Some pastors previous to Collier also apparently kept the minutes, which were almost invariably countersigned by the clerk. But by the 1960's, as is apparent from the style, clerks kept the minutes themselves. A clear change of writing style, including the appearance of British spelling, marks the place at which Collier began keeping them in 1974 – and stopped after commission oversight began in early 1978.

11. Oral interview with Holshouser, September 1987.

12. During the celebration of Rumble's centennial in summer 1987, the unfortunate pattern repeated itself: see below.

13. The Keppels were very active at Rumble Church during their retirement years in Blowing Rock: he as church treasurer for a time during the 1950's, she as officer in the WOC: see numerous clippings in RMPC Scrapbook, Vols I and II.

14. RMPC Session Records, Book 4 [1977-1979], meetings of November 4 and 8, and December 9, 1976; congregational meetings of November 14 and December 16, 1976, and February 13, 1977.

15. "Findings and Actions of the Commission on the Minister," with cover memorandum dated March 19, 1978, appended to RMPC Session Records, meeting of same date. When Hartsell arrived in early 1980, this last condition had not been carried out.

16. RMPC Session Records, meeting of August 29, 1978.

17. *Ibid.*, session meeting of September 7, 1978.

18. *Ibid.*, session meetings of September 7 and 28, 1978.

19. *Ibid.*, session meeting of September 28, 1978.

20. Report of Administrative Commission Regarding the Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church, in Minutes of Concord Presbytery, called meeting of November 21, 1978, pp. 89-91.

21. *Ministerial Directory*, 1983 edition.

22. RMPC Session Records, meetings of May 20 and July 5, 1979.

23. For about three months that fall, the Rev. Frank Alfred (Al) Mathes, recently retired from the Huntersville Church, and a summer resident of Blowing Rock, served as interim pastor. Mathes has preached numerous times at Rumble. He and his wife, Jackie, spend winters in Birmingham, Alabama, with their daughter, Rachel, a teacher of music and a gifted soprano who has sung with the Metropolitan Opera and in Europe. Rachel Mathes's occasional appearances as soloist at Rumble are always a treat for the congregation and choir.

24. Letter, signed by Mary Shore, December 20, 1979, in RMPC Session Records.

25. Statistical Report for General Assembly, for Year Ending December 31, 1979, copy in RMPC Session Records.

26. The SRC has had four chairmen since its creation during Brinkerhoff's pastorate: Eugene Bowman, of Mocksville; Andy Nimmo, of Dunedin, Florida, now a full-time resident of Blowing Rock; Henry Enterline, of Sarasota, Florida; and Neely, who has recently taken up permanent residence in town.

27. File, "Grandfather Home Day Materials," RMPC records. Oral interview with Jim Swinkola, present executive director of Grandfather Home, October 1987. The mission of the Home has itself undergone change since the mid-1960's. It is presently far less engaged in long term child care and custody, and does considerably more family counseling and placement of children with foster and adoptive homes.

28. RMPC service bulletins for annual preaching missions, prepared and supplied by the Rev. Hartsell.

29. RMPC service bulletin insert, "The Alice Lentz Funeral Pall," 1984, supplied by Bernie Greene. In her memory, the family also donated a bronze plaque for "her" pew in the church in 1985, and the next year gave vases, reminders of Mrs. Lentz's frequent gift of flowers to enhance the beauty of the church service.

30. "Jethro Rumble's Life Had Impact All Across North Carolina," and "Presbyterians To Observe 'Rumble Sunday,'" *The Blowing Rocket*, June 12, 1987, p. 15; "Sunday Was Historic Day For Rumble As Church Celebrates Centennial," *ibid*, June 19, 1987, p. 2. The service was videotaped by *Blowing Rocket* editor and church member Jerry Burns, and tape recorded by the minister. Audiotapes of all the services are at RMPC. Much of the information in the following paragraphs came as well from the pamphlet "Centennial Celebration 1887–1987," prepared by the Rev. Hartsell.

31. See paper prepared for session members by Lovelace, 1985, in RMPC records; and information from the Rev. Hartsell. The session wanted them to take full responsibility for a children's choir in exchange for the raise—a change from the job description under which they had been employed. Their combined salary in 1987 came to \$6,600.

32. Oral interview with Smyth, June 1987.

33. The classic little book by the Rev. Dr. Walter L. Lingle, *Presbyterians: Their History and Beliefs* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978; first published 1944) has been revised and updated by the Rev. Dr. John W. Kuykendall, president of Davidson College and Rumble Church's guest preacher on Rumble Sunday, 1987. It is an excellent introduction for the layperson on both the organic and organizational characteristics of the denomination.

This page intentionally left blank

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander, Nancy. *Here Will I Dwell: The Story of Caldwell County*. n.p. Copyright by author, 1956.

Arthur, John Preston. *A History of Watauga County, North Carolina, With Sketches of Prominent Families*. Richmond: Everett Waddey Co., 1915. Repr. 1976.

Beaty, Mary D. *A History of the Davidson College Presbyterian Church*. Davidson, NC: Davidson College Presbyterian Church, [1987].

Blackmun, Ora. *Western North Carolina: Its Mountains and Its People to 1880*. Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1977.

Brooks, Maurice. *The Appalachians*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965.

Chamberlain, Hope Summerell. *This Was Home*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1938.

Claiborne, Jack. *The Charlotte Observer: Its Time and Place, 1896-1986*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.

Clark, Thomas F. *History of Myers Park Presbyterian Church, 1926-1966*. Charlotte, NC: Myers Park Presbyterian Church, 1966.

Craig, David Irvin. *A History of the Development of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina, and of Synodical Missions, together with Evangelistic Addresses by James I. Vance, D.D., and Others*. Richmond: Whittet & Shepperson, 1907.

Craig, Edward Marshall. *Highways and Byways of Appalachia: A Study of the Work of the Synod of Appalachia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*. Kingsport, TN: Kingsport Press, 1927.

Daingerfield, Marjorie. "Old Blowing Rock." n.p., n.d. Typescript at Community Library of Blowing Rock.

Davidson, Chalmers Gaston. *The Plantation World around Davidson*. Rev. and enl. ed. Davidson, N.C.: Briarpatch Press, 1982. First publ. 1969.

Davidson College. *Sketches of the Graduating Class of Davidson College North Carolina 1872-1876*. n.p., n.d. [Davidson, NC: 1916?].

Dixon, Max. *The Wataugans*. Nashville, TN: Tennessee American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1976.

Dunn, Robert A. *History of the First Presbyterian Church of Charlotte, N.C.* n.p., n.d. [Charlotte, NC: 1932. Rev., 1945].

Eller, Ronald D. *Miners, Millhands and Mountaineers; Industrialization of the Appalachian South, 1880-1930*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982.

First Presbyterian Church, Detroit, MI. *One Hundredth Anniversary Celebration, 1818-1918*. n.p., n.d. [Detroit, 1918].

First Presbyterian Church, Lenoir, NC. *Minutes and Register 1852-1928*, 2 Vols.; *Session Minutes 1928-1962*, 2 Vols. Raleigh: North Carolina State Archives, microfilm copy.

Foote, William Henry. *Sketches of North Carolina. Historical and Biographical*. New York: Robert Carter, 1846. Repr. 1912.

Gaffney, Sanna, et. al., *The Heritage of Watauga County, North Carolina, Volume I*, 1984. Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Co., 1984.

Garth, John G. *Sixty Years of Home Missions in the Synod of North Carolina*. Charlotte: Standard Publ. Co., 1948.

Gobbel, Luther L. *Church-State Relationships in Education in North Carolina Since 1776*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1938.

Harwell, Coleman A. *The Centennial History of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Originally Known as Moore Memorial Presbyterian Church*. n.p. [Knoxville, TN], 1979.

Holt, Betty. *History of the First Presbyterian Church, Highlands, North Carolina*. n.p., n.d. [1985].

Hooker, Elizabeth R. *Religion in the Highlands; Native Churches and Missionary Enterprises in the Southern Appalachian Area*. New York: The Home Mission Council, 1933.

Hood, Frazer, ed. *If Ye Knew These Things. The Presbyterian Task in North Carolina*. Charlotte: Presbyterian Standard, 1927.

Keys, Walter K. *Lessons at Sunset and Other Sermons*. n.p., n.d. [Blowing Rock, NC, 1957?]

Krider, Josephine Kluttz. *History of the First Presbyterian Church, Salisbury, North Carolina 1821-1971*. Privately printed. 1971.

LaMotte, Louis C. *Colored Light: The Story of the Influence of Columbia Theological Seminary, 1828-1936*. Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1937.

Lefler, Hugh Talmage and Albert Ray Newsome. *The History of a Southern State: North Carolina*. 3rd ed. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973.

Leonard, Jacob Calvin. *[History of] The Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church*. Lexington, NC: n.p., 1940.

Lingle, Walter L. *Memories of Davidson College*. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1947.

_____ and John W. Kuykendall. *Presbyterians, Their History and Beliefs*. 4th rev. ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1978. First Published 1944.

McGeachy, Neill Roderick. *Confronted by Challenge; A History of the Presbytery of Concord 1795-1973. Including the former Presbytery of Kings Mountain and Presbytery of Winston-Salem*. n.p.: The Delmar Co., 1985. Published by order of the Presbytery of Concord.

McMillan, Homer. *Other Men Labored*. Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1937.

Machlin, Milt. *Libby*. New York: Tower Books, 1980.

Melton, George E. "St. Andrews: A Brief History." Laurinburg, NC: St. Andrews Presbyterian College, 1978.

Mitchell, Elisha. *Diary of a Geological Tour by Dr. Elisha Mitchell in 1827 and 1828*. Introduction and Notes by Dr. Kemp P. Battle. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1905. James Sprunt Historical Monograph, No. 6.

Moore, Walter W. *Appreciations and Historical Addresses*. n.p. [Richmond]: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, n.d. [1913?]

Morse, H. N. *Home Missions—Today and Tomorrow. A Review and a Forecast*. New York: Home Missions Council, 1934.

Neal, Margaret Tufts. *And Set Aglow a Sacred Flame; History of the Edgar Tufts Memorial Association 1895-1942*. Banner Elk, NC: Puddingstone Press, Lees-McRae College, 1983.

Nelson, Hart M. *The Appalachian Presbyterian: Some Rural-Urban Differences, A Preliminary Report*. Bowling Green, KY: Western Kentucky University College of Commerce Office of Research and Services, Research Bulletin #5, 1968.

Noble, M. C. S. *A History of the Public Schools of North Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930.

Ovens, David. *If This Be Treason: A Look At His Town and Times*. Charlotte, NC: Heritage House, 1957.

Parker, J. K., Jr. "A Study of the Needs, Growth, and Development of the Presbyterian Church of Boone, N.C." Master's Thesis, Appalachian State Teachers College, 1955.

Peeler, J. Banks. *A Story of the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church*. Published under the supervision of the Board of Editors, and authorized by the Synod. n.p., 1968.

Peterson, Katherine J. "Boone Fork Institute." *Watauga County Times Past* No. 14 (Sept. 1984).

Presbyterian Church in the U.S. *Facing the Situation: Addresses Delivered at the Fourth General Convention of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, Presbyterian Church in the U.S., held in Charlotte, N.C., Feb. 16-18, 1915, Dallas, Texas, Feb. 23-25, 1915*. Athens, GA.: Laymen's Missionary Movement, (PCUS), 1915.

Powell, William S., ed. *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, Volume I, A-C*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979.

Raine, James Watt. *The Land of Saddle-Bags: A Study of the Mountain People of Appalachia*. New York: Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movement of the United States and Canada, 1924. Special edition publ. by Presbyterian Committee of Publication, Richmond, VA, 1924.

Rumple, Jethro. *A History of Rowan County, North Carolina; Containing Sketches of Prominent Families and Distinguished Men*. Bicentennial Edition. Repr. with a new Index by Edith M. Clark. Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1974. Orig. publ. Salisbury, NC, 1881. Repr. 1916, 1929.

_____. *The History of Presbyterianism in North Carolina*. Repr. from the *North Carolina Presbyterian 1878-1887*. With Appendixes. Richmond: The Library of Union Theological Seminary, 1966. Historical Transcripts No. 3.

Shackelford, Laurel, and Bill Weinberg, eds. *Our Appalachia; An Oral History*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977.

Shaw, Cornelia Rebekah. *Davidson College*. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1923.

Sill, James Burges. *Historical Sketches of Churches in the Diocese of Western North Carolina Episcopal Church*. Asheville, NC: Publishing Office, Church of the Redeemer, 1955.

Sloop, Mary T. Martin, with LeGette Blythe. *Miracle in the Hills*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1953.

Smith, C. Alphonso. *Presbyterians in Educational Work in North Carolina Since 1813*. Address at the Centennial Celebration of the Synod of North Carolina, in Alamance Church, Guilford County, October 7, 1913. Offpr. from *Union Seminary Review*, Dec.-Jan. 1913/14.

Smith, John Robert. *The Church That Stayed: The Life and Times of Central Presbyterian Church in the Heart of Atlanta, 1858-1978*. Atlanta, GA: The Atlanta Historical Society, 1979.

Spence, Thomas Hugh, Jr. *A Memoir of Elizabeth Holman Spence*. Montreat, NC: for private distribution, 1981.

_____. *An Annotated Autobiography*. Montreat, NC: for private distribution, 1981.

_____. *The Presbyterian Congregation on Rocky River*. Concord, NC: Rocky River Presbyterian Church, 1954.

Synod of North Carolina. *Centennial Address*. Delivered at Alamance Church, Greensboro, N.C., October 7, 1913. n.p., n.d. [1913?].

Thompson, Ernest Trice. *Presbyterians in the South*, 3 volumes. Richmond: John Knox Press, 1963-1973.

_____. *Presbyterian Missions in the Southern United States*. Richmond: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1934.

Tindall, George Brown. *The Emergence of the New South 1913-1945*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967.

Van Noppen, Ina W. and John J. Van Noppen. *Western North Carolina Since the Civil War*. Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1973.

Vance, James Isaac. *God's Open: Sermons that take us Out-of-doors*. New York and Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1924.

Whisnant, David E. *Modernizing the Mountaineer. People, Power, and Planning in Appalachia*. Boone, NC: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1980.

Whitt, Anne Hall. *The Suitcases; Three Orphaned Sisters In the Great Depression in the South*. Foreword by Charles Kuralt. Washington, DC: Acropolis Books Ltd., 1982.

Wills, Jesse. "The Towers See One Hundred Years: The Story of the First Presbyterian Church Building, Nashville, Tennessee." Church Pamphlet, 1951.

Woodside, Robert Edward. "The Educational Development of Avery County." Master's Thesis, Appalachian State Teachers College, 1952.

Index

Note: Entire family is often indexed under same last name entry

Appalachia, region 51, 54, 145

Appalachia, Synod of 54-55, 72, 145-146, 164

Baker, D. 103

Beall, B. L., R. L. 10, 16, 18, 19

Bernhardt 21, 81

Blacks, worship arrangements for 87-88, 110-111, 130-131

Blackwell, Mrs. E. J. (Shirley) 2, 161

Blake, Darrell 154

Blake, J. R. 5

Boone, town of 5, 10, 15, 49, 113, 145, 152, 166, 168, 169

Bowman, E. S. 111, 133-136

Brady, Mrs. M. J. 6, 23, 43

Brinkerhoff, A. B. 127-138, 167

Brown, C. L. 97, 111, 152

Brown, Mrs. C. F. (Hattie) 39, 99

Buchanan, G. S. 77-80, 85, 86, 88, 102-103

Burns, Mrs. J. (Ethel) 86, 102, 108, 141

Campbell, E. T. 162

Campbell, R. F. 54

Cannon, Mrs. J. C. (Annie) 42, 70, 84-86, 88, 106, 110, 127, 128,
135-137, 141

Cappel, S. S. 112-113, 116

Carson, C. C. 54

Coffey, O. 13, 72, 100, 108, 128, 143, 154

Collier, F. C. 152-158, 160, 161, 163

Concord, Presbytery of 3, 7-9, 11, 19-21, 24, 34, 35, 38, 49, 51, 54,
55, 80, 81, 83, 116, 135, 140, 145, 155, 156, 167

Critcher 38, 75, 99

Davant, C. 82, 121

Davidson College 1-5, 7, 8, 20, 42-44, 51, 52, 56, 66, 67, 97, 101,
105, 114, 124, 127, 140, 162, 164-167

Dunn, R. A. 87, 106, 123-125, 132, 138, 139, 141, 158, 160

Earnest, R. D. 104, 106-112, 169

Farm House Singers 127, 161

Fawcette, E. W. 16, 19

Frye, L. M. 47, 163

Gage, G. 14

Gibbs, L. B. 140, 164

Grandfather Home for Children 42, 45, 50, 76, 82, 83, 98, 100, 104,
106, 123, 125, 134, 146, 161, 166

Green Park Hotel 14, 17, 124, 131, 168

Greene 72, 85, 102, 108, 121, 122, 125, 128, 133, 137, 138, 141, 143,
152, 164

Hall, J. P. 52

Hall, G. W. 45, 83

Hardin, R. B. 86, 102, 103, 121, 122, 125, 128, 138, 152

Harper, G. W. F. 14, 21, 34, 110

Hartsell, V. E. 127, 159-165, 167

Holshouser, J. R. 140-146, 151-152, 153, 154, 161, 167

Holshouser, W. L. 39, 40, 46, 49, 50, 53, 65, 66, 70, 79, 83, 85-87,
99, 101-103, 110, 112, 121, 125, 127, 165, 168

Holston, Presbytery of 55, 68-70, 72, 73, 75-77, 83, 86, 89, 97,
112, 113, 116, 121, 127, 130, 140, 145, 146, 164

Holt, D. R. II 158-159, 167

Hook, C. C. 46

Ingle, J. 15, 17, 83

Keys, W. K. 55, 74-76, 86, 89, 97-100, 102-104, 106, 110, 111,
115, 116, 121-128, 134, 135, 143, 160

Kluttz (Klutz) 15, 70, 75, 77, 98, 102, 122, 124, 125, 165

Knox, J. M. 70

Lees-McRae Institute, later College 39-41, 51, 52, 103, 138, 161,
163, 166

Lenoir, town, Church in 1, 2, 11, 16, 17, 19-21, 24, 34-36, 49, 55,
65, 66, 70, 81, 142

- Lovelace, N. 165
Lentz 47, 99, 122, 125, 143, 163, 164, 165
Lynch, Mrs. C. A. 144
- Martin, W. J., Col. 2, 4-6, 8, 19, 20, 43, 51
Martin, W. J., Jr. 5, 8, 42-44, 45-48, 51, 52-53, 65-66, 70, 80, 81,
101
Mayview, neighborhood of 66-68, 84, 105, 122, 131
McKaraheer, C. G. 69, 70, 72-74
Moore, W. W. 37
Moore, O., Jr. 112
Morris, W. M. 3, 6, 13, 18, 23, 34
Munroe, C. A. 1, 16, 18-24, 34-37
- Nebel, Mrs. W. 143, 144
Newland, L. T. 97, 113-116, 121, 122, 123
- Ovens, D. 98, 104-106, 109-111, 134, 161
- Parker, J. K. 113, 152, 154
Payne, Mrs. S. 103, 112, 152
Payne, C. M. 12
Pell, R. P. 23, 33-36
Plumtree School 52, 89
- Rhodes, C. 115, 122
Rumple, J. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6-20, 23, 33-35, 42, 44, 45, 48, 51, 80, 81
"Rumple Sunday" 162-163, 164, 165
- Salisbury, town, Church in 2-4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 16, 44, 48, 70, 83
Savage, W. R. 41, 48
Shulls Mills, town, Church in 39, 68-70, 72-74, 76, 89, 132
Sloop, M. M. 5, 51-53, 55, 56
Smith, M. S. 151n, 159, 165
Smith, W. R. 76, 77
Snively, Mrs. T. V. (Anne) 110, 136
Southall, T. B. 97
Spence, T. H. 67-70, 76, 108, 123
Stewart, Mrs. A. M. (Emma) 1-3, 14-16, 24
Stringfellow, W. W. 48
Summer Residents Committee (SRC) 133-136, 140, 141, 144, 160
- Tester (Teaster) 75, 77, 84, 86, 102, 103, 114

- Thurston, W. 113, 116
Tufts, E. 17, 24, 33, 35-42, 44, 45, 47, 48, 50, 52, 54-57, 65, 68-71,
76, 81, 82, 125, 145, 161, 166, 167
Tufts, E. H. 56-57, 97

Underdown, E. G. 49, 70, 83, 85

Vance, J. I. 45, 48, 54, 55, 68, 70, 71, 75, 78, 80, 81, 87, 98, 100,
103, 106, 108, 112, 125, 139, 163, 167
Vance, M. 101, 121, 139, 154
Vardell, C. G. 6-8, 42-45, 48, 50, 53, 80-82, 87, 88, 125, 152, 163,
166

Walser, R. 22, 23, 38, 107, 112
Warfield, M. G. 82, 107n
Weedon, H. W. 23, 38, 39, 68
White, J. 47, 49, 69, 70, 75, 77, 78, 85, 103, 108, 113
"White Christmas" 133
Whiting, W. S. 68-70
Williams, C. 76, 85, 100, 102, 104
Williamson, E. M. 44, 45
Women of the Church 39, 83, 138, 142, 143, 159, 164

Yelton, J. 89, 121, 126

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

A lifelong member of Rumble Memorial Church, DONALD B. SAUNDERS is a professor emeritus of history at Appalachian State University. He received his B.A. in history from Davidson College in 1962 and his Ph.D. in history from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1974. He has been a member of the faculty at Appalachian State University since 1971. His focus of study was Nineteenth and Twentieth Century European and German history. He was the coordinator of the University Honors Program in History and the faculty advisor to Sigma Phi Epsilon honors fraternity. He retired in 2009.